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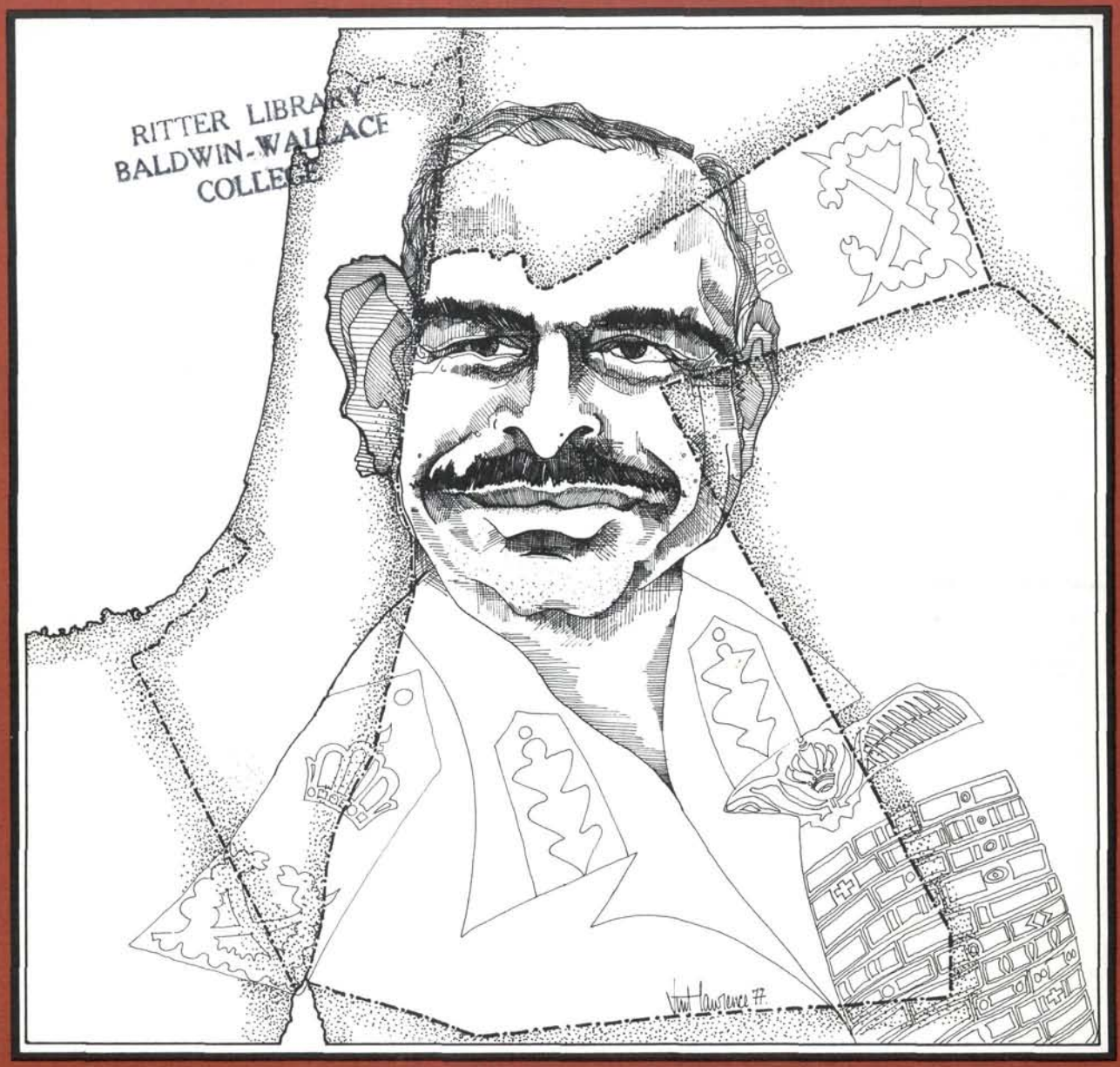

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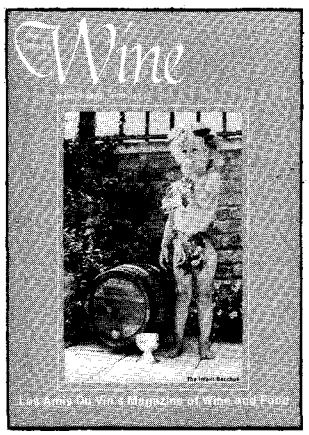

CHAPTERS NATIONWIDE

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TRB

from Washington ®
June 25, 1977

Sell it on TV

Fifty years ago Herbert Hoover gave me his autograph. He was then Secretary of Commerce and was opening the first public Washington-to-New York experimental television broadcast. He scrawled it on the program: "Herbert Hoover, April 7, 1927."

People had talked about television for years but nobody really believed in it; radio, however, was another matter. At Hoover's initiative President Harding called a radio conference in 1922. Many thought it had a big future, and at the conference Secretary Hoover even mentioned the possibilities of "ether advertising." But he added reassuringly, "It is inconceivable that we should allow a great possibility for service to be drowned in advertising chatter."

Radio's possibilities in politics were soon evident. Coolidge's opening address to Congress was broadcast in December 1923, and a year later the Democrat's Madison Square Garden blood-letting went out on radio, all 103 ballots of it. Then came 1927—and television.

I have the account of the affair in the next day's *New York Times*, with a front page, two column, headline: "Far-off Speakers Seen/ As well as heard here/ in a test of television." Yes, sir: "Like a Photo Come to Life," and "For the first time in History." But there is a sub-head that haunts me. It is a warning, like Hoover's comment that it would be "inconceivable" to allow the invention to be "drowned in advertising chatter." The sub-head cautions,

COMMERCIAL USE IN DOUBT

How could anybody coin money out of television, it asked by implication? Yet even if there might not be commercial use for the new toy, just the same there was an invisible exclamation mark after every sentence in the *New York Times'* account:

"When the television pictures were thrown on a screen two by three inches the likeness was excellent. It was as if a photograph had suddenly come to life and begun to talk, smile, nod its head and look this way and that. When the screen was enlarged to two by three feet, the results were not so good."

What did viewers see on their calling-card-size screen that first time, after the official formalities were over? From the AT&T studio at Whippany, a comedian, "A. Dolan," played a comic Irishman and then quickly switched to blackface, changing accent to match: "It was the first vaudeville act that ever went on the air as a talking picture," the *Times* noted, "and in its possibilities it may be compared with the Fred Ott sneeze of more than thirty years ago, the first piece of comedy ever recorded in motion pictures."

I guess I don't know about that Fred Ott sneeze. But I am reassured to find that the next number from the studio at Whippany was "a short, humorous dialect talk by Mrs. H.A. Frederick of Mountain Lakes. . . ."

I can see Secretary of Commerce Hoover again, as I write this, wearing his two-inch starched collar, sitting at the head of the table in the tawdry rented Commerce Department building on Pennsylvania Avenue, not meeting your eye at a press conference but then looking up, shyly as it seemed, amazingly well informed.

There is sadness in these recollections. Radio and television, for example, came just too late for Woodrow Wilson in his effort to take the US into the League. Without radio or TV, or even a loudspeaker on the lectern, he couldn't reach the indifferent man in the street with his passionate conviction and superb eloquence. His message was that we had won the war, that the world was suddenly malleable, that we must cast it in a peaceful mold before it hardened again. The doomed Wilson set out from Washington to rouse the nation against the Senate isolationists in 1919 and traveled 8000 miles, and made 80 speeches, each different. He collapsed and was hurried back home a broken man. In all those tremendous appeals he made ("Dare we reject it and break the heart of mankind?") he never reached a fraction of the people in a month that Jimmy Carter can reach in 30 minutes on live television. The Second World War that Wilson predicted appeared punctually.

So now, 50 years later, President

(continued on page 34)

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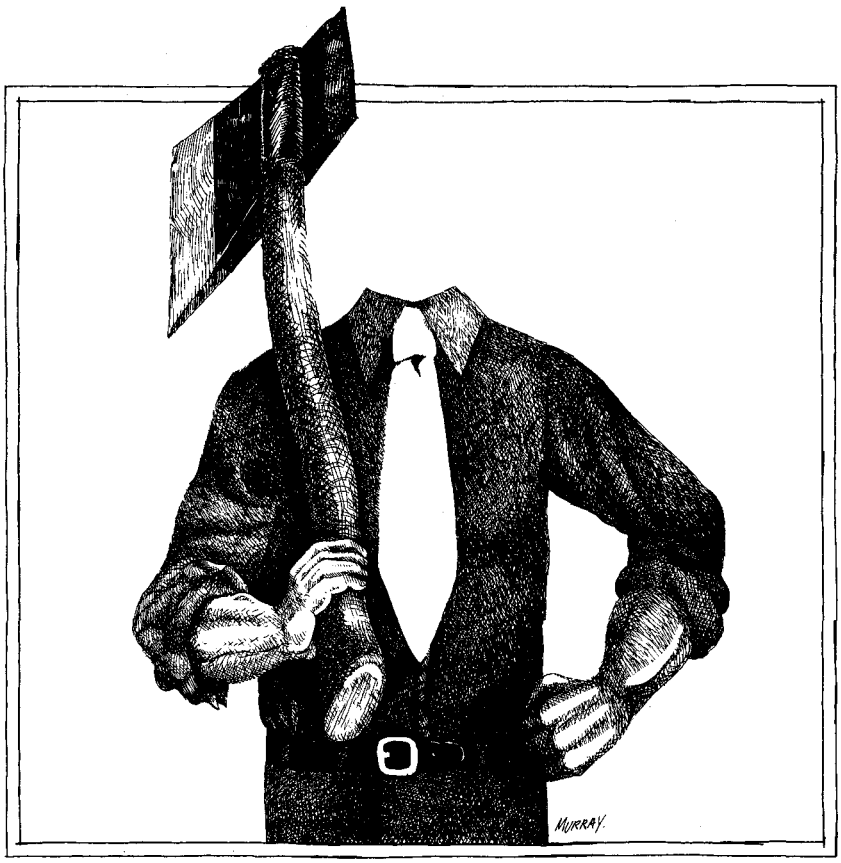

"Some budget slashers are missing the point."

"Budget cutting in state and local governments is politically popular. Unfortunately, it's not always financially smart.

Take New York for example. Without much thought, the state proposed to shut down 135 day care centers, serving 7,500 working families, in hopes of saving $20 million.

In fact, this 'saving' would have created $18.8 million in *spending* by other government agencies, both state and federal.

A Columbia School of Public Health study calculated that for every dollar cut from day care spending, 94 cents would have to be spent on increased welfare, Medicaid, foster care and hospital payments.

And you can't begin to put a price on the loss of human dignity working people suffer when lack of day care forces them to join welfare and unemployment lines.

Careless budget cutting isn't limited to New York, however. The state of Massachusetts recently decided to save $6 million by cutting payments to welfare patients in state hospitals.

But someone had to pay the hospital bills. So taxpayers in a number of cities including Boston – where property taxes are the highest in the nation – had to pay for the 'savings' claimed by the state.

As the union representing state and local government workers, we see these kinds of blind budget decisions being made every day.

We know legitimate budget cuts are hard enough to live with. But false cuts are intolerable."

"The business of government is people."

–**Jerry Wurf,** President

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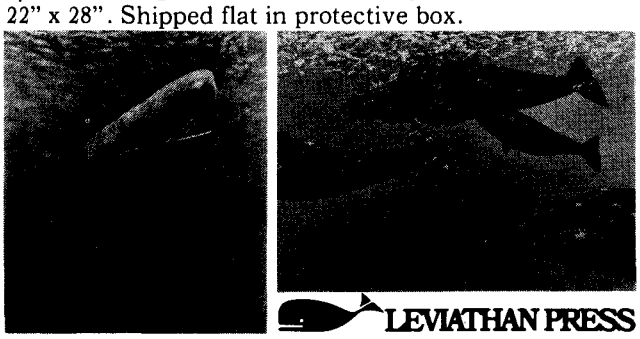

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

June 25, 1977

Energy Crisis on the Hill

When Dean Acheson wrote his memoirs in the late '60s, America and Western Europe had already become addicted to Persian Gulf oil. He saw this as a threat, but proposed a simple remedy. Reflecting on the Suez crisis of 1956, Acheson wrote, "More alert American and British governments might have brought science and technology to their aid in mitigating some of the problems presented to them by Egypt, the Suez Canal and the dependence of Western Europe on the oil of the Middle East. A fraction of our investment in the space program put into the development of a practicable electric automobile and of nuclear power plants . . . could do much to solve our air pollution problems and free Europe from dependence on the Middle East and the Soviet Union from much of its motive for penetrating it . . . ." Optimism of that sort seems weirdly out of date. None of the current energy experts would speak so confidently about the chances of getting out of our predicament. Yet the fundamental problem has hardly changed since Acheson wrote *Present at the Creation*, or for that matter, since the Suez crisis. Nowadays, we simply are worse off: we have grown more dependent on Persian Gulf oil and less certain that a substitute can be found.

Jimmy Carter's attempt to reduce America's oil dependence—the third attempt in three administrations since 1973—is being put to a vote this month in Congress. Unlike the energy plans that came before, it will not pump vast quantities of public money into nuclear power or synthetic fuel plants. It avoids giving oil producers the windfall profits that Nixon and Ford offered as an "incentive" to invest in new drilling projects. It concentrates almost exclusively on developing new ways to cut down energy use, and in this sense it is less costly than its predecessors. A second virtue is that, through a complex system of taxes and rebates, it attempts to return to the public most of the money it will collect by raising energy prices. But precisely because it is a tax bill—and a very complicated one—it has run into heavy flak on Capitol Hill. To the extent that this antipathy forces the President to clarify and simplify his energy policy, it serves a good end. But many of the votes in the last two weeks have been obstructive.

We know of one case in which Congress has done the President a favor by killing a particularly intricate scheme that would have done little to save energy but would have created a boondoggle for Detroit. This was the vote to drop the subsidy for the sale of small, gas-efficient cars. The Ways and Means Committee made the right decision in rejecting this idea, we think, because the subsidy was poorly designed. It would have given an undeserved bonus this year to the American auto makers, even though they specialize in producing the world's least efficient cars. In addition, it would have given the industry an excuse for demanding—and probably getting—an international auto cartel arrangement to divvy up the subsidy and shield American companies from small car competition from abroad. (See "What America Makes," *TNR*, June 4.) It would have made a bad precedent, and we were glad to see it dropped.

Other changes in the bill were not so encouraging. There were several attempts to gut sections of the bill to please local constituencies. These parochial interests have a way of ganging up when they perceive a common threat and they can have a devastating effect. The President and his aides saw the lobbies swarming over the bill in the last two weeks, and they quickly sent out an alarm. They singled out two votes in particular as an indication that Congress had failed to respond to the "moral equivalent of war" that Carter invoked last April. The first was a decision by the Ways and Means Committee to strike out the proposed "standby tax" on gasoline that would have raised gasoline prices by no more than 50 cents a gallon by 1985. The vote in

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committee to drop it was 27 to 10, and the chairman said there would be no move to reconsider it later. This was a victory for people who commute by car, auto companies and auto workers; it apparently made the President furious. Another lobby—the oil industry—won a victory when a House Commerce subcommittee voted 12 to 10 in favor of an amendment offered by Rep. Robert Krueger (D, Tex.) to remove all price controls from natural gas. Carter has proposed to increase the price of natural gas, but he would retain federal price controls on interstate sales and even extend them into the state market where they do not exist today. Press Secretary Jody Powell told reporters that the vote on natural gas was an $80 billion "ripoff of the American consumer." He relayed the President's view that "the oil companies, the auto companies and their lobbies won significant preliminary victories" in the voting battle.

Legislators were stung by these words, and they sent Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd out to meet the press and complain that Carter was overreacting. Byrd said that the committee votes could and probably would be changed when the full House and Senate vote on the bill and that the President should calm down. Implicit in this little talk was the assumption that special interests—oil and autos—always have their way in committee, and that their dirty work on important legislation can always be tidied up later if need be. President Carter doesn't make this assumption, and he can hardly be faulted for thinking that committee members should be judged by the same standards that are used to judge the full House or Senate. We don't think Carter spoke out of turn.

The President later tried to soothe tempers by explaining at a press conference that he hadn't meant to criticize Congress "as a whole." He said he merely intended to point out that the special interests were gnawing at his bill, and he hoped to "arouse" the American people to the fact. This was a warning shot fired across the bow. When he spoke, the Ways and Means Committee was getting ready to vote on one of the most important parts of the bill, the wellhead tax on crude oil that would raise the price of American oil to the OPEC level. Several congressmen had proposed to give the industry a share of the revenue brought in by the tax so that oil and gas drillers could "plow it back" into exploration for new fields. But when the plowback idea came up for a vote, it lost badly. Carter's warning seems to have had an effect.

Congress' method thus far has been to take what is really a set of modest conservation proposals by Carter and soften them, plank by plank, to accommodate people who find them discomforting. The emphasis has been on calming the local and short term worries of special constituencies. The members seem appalled that Carter fights back when he cannot get support for conservation from his own party, and they fume about his intrusion into the special, private world of committee politics.

And while the debate sputters along, the US bill for foreign oil is expected to climb from $34 billion last year to $41 billion this year; the trade deficit reaches for new depths (in the first third of the year it was already two billion dollars larger than for all of 1976); and Saudi Arabia tests the market to see whether it can raise the price of oil another five percent. The US continues to insist on having the lowest gasoline prices in the industrial world—encouraging its use—and friends in Europe wonder what we mean when we lecture them about the energy crisis.

On the Other Hand

Election Reform

Arguments against abolition of the Electoral College represent conservatism in its purest form. Here is an institution that has evolved into a vestige. TRB described its original purpose in a recent column: "to safeguard America from the common people." It doesn't serve that purpose today, and nobody wants it to. The Electoral College exists today *only* because it existed yesterday. Yet because it does exist, arguments materialize that it should continue. It is as if a huge neoclassical monument had been installed at what is now, say, the intersection of 14th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. There it sits, blocking traffic, thwarting the processes of democracy, built in a style we no longer appreciate and representing sentiments we no longer approve of. But proposals to tear it down meet with resistance based on arcane considerations involving the angle of the sun, or the value of strategic stockpiles of marble.

TNR's unfortunate editorial endorsement of the Electoral College (May 7) was conservatism unsullied by argument. Taking its text from the late Alexander Bickel, its burden was not so much the potential dangers of this particular reform, but rather fear of the mysterious forces that can be released whenever things are done differently from the way they have been done before. "A long leap in the dark," Bickel called it. "The sudden abandonment of institutions is an act that reverberates in ways no one can predict and many come to regret."

The editorial states that abolitionists "base their case primarily on the potential for a constitutional crisis." This is incorrect. Sensible people oppose the Electoral College simply because of the potential for an undemocratic result in which the person who gets the most votes in a presidential election does not become

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Correspondence

Decline and fall

To the editors:

I think that Wolf Von Eckardt's review of *Open Spaces: The Life of American Cities*, by August Heckscher and Phyllis Robinson (*TNR*, May 21) just about sums up the problems of our decaying cities.

> *Urban life and urban amenities . . . are brought about by urban open space. It is not so much what happens in the buildings, but what happens in the spaces in between them . . . that determines the quality of a city. The open spaces bring forth pleasure, recreation . . . the essence of city life.*

Mr. Heckscher and the idle chic of the Fifth Avenue and Upper East Side crowd are not the New Yorkers who grew up in the South Bronx where what happened in the buildings was vandalism and arson. What happened in the spaces between them was that the spaces got bigger, as more buildings were burned down. The amenities no doubt increased. The South Bronx now has much "amenity." Brooklyn's "amenities" are also increasing.

When people live in fear that the next time they see their spouse or child it will be at the Medical Examiner's office; when they consider if burglars will let them keep a television set long enough to renew the service contract—then they don't care that Mr. Heckscher's Parks Department didn't do a decent job of cutting the grass or painting the benches in the open spaces.

I cry when I come home from work past the empty and broken-glass-strewn lots where homes and stores once stood. I cry when I read articles praising those who have killed the town where I've spent my whole life.

Eugene Falik
Far Rockaway, New York

He knows what he likes

To the editors:

I read with amused interest the strained comments by your "Washington Diarist," H.F., in the May 14th issue.

This letter is not intended to challenge Mr. Fairlie's critique of the Ed McGowin sculpture, no more than I would question the opinions of critics for *The Washington Post* and the *Washington Star*, who also penned comments thereon. The pleasure, or lack thereof, that anyone gleans from any creative work does not justify its real or rhetorical burning. Our history is darkened by unfortunate attempts so to do.

It seems, however, that Mr. Fairlie does need a bit of help. If his understanding of the English language is as astute as his knowledge of art history, it is of little wonder that he finds the language by which contemporary art is discussed "incomprehensible." Be advised that Salvador Dali (born 1904) was three years old at the time Picasso painted *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907). Precocious, that Dali.

The experimental nature of contemporary art and the scope of its exploration makes unlikely a universal, consistent appeal. Any product of a skilled artist falls within the genre of art, as defined by *Webster*, much as any deliberate misrepresentation of historical fact under the guise of literary comments constitutes "charlatanry."

A good art critic places his subject into context, enhancing and expanding the experience of the work. It is my conclusion that Mr. Fairlie grasps neither context, nor art, nor history. Perhaps he should read rather than write.

Benjamin R. Jacobs
Washington, DC

Not worth the price

To the editors:

As I read Daniel Yergin's "Soviet Trade" (*TNR*, Jun. 4), I wondered at the enthusiasm he attributes to American businessmen and bankers about the value of trade between American companies and Soviet agencies. Having followed such stories for several years from several sources, such as *The Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week*, I wonder at the apparent naivete of businessmen and reporters both. The strongest impression I retain about Soviet deals is that the actual cash flow to the American firms—usable dollars in America or other dollar-currency countries—is actually very meager.

The Soviet trade officials seem eager for extremely low-interest loans, with deferred payback schedules; barter instead of cash; and inordinate "fringe benefits" to sweeten contracts already made costly by delays and restrictions caused by Soviet trading techniques. Though I agree with traditional commercial trade between companies in different nations, the Soviet agencies are playing a far different game. Whatever its name, it cannot any longer be called "international trade." That's why I question Yergin's conclusions that (1) we lack experience required to come to a realistic conclusion about effects on Soviet-American relations, and (2) "there is a good chance that it would have a definite positive impact."

On the contrary, it seems that the Soviet trade officials operate from far different assumptions, all of them rooted in one essential condition: never conciliate on a *substantive* point. This has been their policy in international politics of the traditional type, and—because the Soviets manage trade as an integral part of their international politicking—they feel free, indeed obligated, to apply this principle to trade negotiations with foreign companies and countries.

Incidentally, because of this, the Soviets are better off dealing with a President Carter who tells them that human rights efforts are an essential element in any dealing, because his obduracy is something they can see and respond to when they decide whether to trade economically (or politically) with America. With the Soviets, you cannot *negotiate* an *agreement*; you can only *sign* a *contract*.

Jack Kunkel
Brooklyn, New York

Medical costs

To the editors:

Eliot Marshall's series of articles on the skyrocketing costs of hospital/medical care are a remarkably accurate analysis of a grave national problem.

I urge you to send reprints of this series to the White House and to each member of Congress.

Thomas F. Paine, Jr., MD
Nashville, Tennessee

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Steady and whole

To the editors:

With the arrival of *TNR*, some readers may immediately turn to TRB's column. They are interested in determining if TRB still has been permitted to extend his comments beyond the back side of the cover page. Other readers may immediately turn to John Osborne's White House Watch to glean any new uncoverings. I know some *TNR* readers who immediately check Stanley Kauffmann's box in order to determine how long he can keep a particular film listed. But for most readers it is the classifieds that provide the distinctive feature that makes the *TNR* so attractive. In a recent set of articles, Henry Fairlie chided newspapers to "see life steady, to see it whole." The *TNR* classifieds meet this criterion.

The most titillating category in the classifieds is the Personals. Has that divorced lady from Manhattan (or was it Cleveland) found happiness or is she still advertising for a mate? What about that man from Boston—the one who described himself as a swashbuckling Brahmin—has he found a correspondent? If only these folks would answer each others' ads.

A second category under classifieds to capture the readers' attention is a bit more ostensibly commercial, covering such items as T-shirts, bumperstickers, watches, etc. Once again a bit more panache and inventiveness could make these items more saleable. For example, one could imagine that these items could be sold as matching sets. The bumpersticker "Insanity is inherited, we get it from our children" could be sold with a matching T-shirt of Sigmund Freud and a Charles Darwin watch. Consider what bumperstickers should be matched with what personality T-shirt. Does the bumpersticker "Eschew Obfuscation" better match Nietzsche or Marx? Does the bumpersticker "Member, Endangered Species" better match George Sand or Emma Goldman? Note, matching tote bags are also available. Perhaps in future Personal ads, individuals could signify which matching set most appropriately describes them, thus providing valuable diagnostic information for would-be responders.

Also represented is a potpourri of assorted ads covering literary services, literature, employment opportunities, etc. Surely if the classifieds play such an important role in making magazines attractive and viable then they deserve their own editor and editorial board.

What evidence can *TNR* provide that they "see life steady," that they "see it whole," if they cannot point to their classifieds. Now that TRB's comments extend to the back of *TNR* (usually next to the Personals), it is time for the editors to reverse the location of TRB's column and the Personals. Does the *TNR* board have the courage to follow such an innovative sensible editorial policy?

Donald Meichenbaum
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Disasters of war

To the editors:

Begin—a fine editorial on a painful subject ("Begin the Begin," *TNR*, May 28). But 90 British soldiers were not killed in the King David Hotel. There were more Jewish and Arab victims than British, and the British were not soldiers. I happened to be near the place.

Walter Laqueur
Harvard University

their hands

To the editors:

The reference to "the primitive sheikhs and crazy colonels of the Middle East" in "Prometheus Rebound" (*TNR*, May 21) gives the impression that *The New Republic* doesn't like Arabs.

Robert G. Goldstraw
APO New York

In reply:

No, the quote does not mean that we dislike Arabs. It means the Col. Qaddafi and the rulers of the backward emirates in the Gulf are odd individuals to have the destiny of the world economy in their hands.

The Editors

Potomac fever

To the editors:

As one who grew up in Government City, I appreciated Morton Kondracke's informative piece ("Blue-collar Caucus," *TNR*, May 28) but I wonder if he wasn't tempted to offer a possible solution to all those well-meaning people living on the dole in Washington, DC—namely, send those "attendant consultants, aides, lobbyists, lawyers, and media commentators" to the hinterlands in search of honest work! Carter's elimination of the black Lincoln Continentals to "diminish the atmosphere of luxury which prevails around the White House" is "symbolic" all right—it signifies nothing.

The only way Representative Beard can truly help the average American is not to encourage him to run to Washington for all the answers but to run away from it! And refuse to pay for the inferior produce of Big Government. There's the rub—how can we expect Beard to do this when it sounds like he too is on the make? Welcome to Washington. Even a (former) blue-collar worker can learn to love that muggy swamp.

Joseph W. Spooner, MD
Los Angeles, California

Geography lesson

To the editors:

A small error crept into Stephen Chapman's *excellent* article in your May 28th issue, "Dump the B-1," which mentioned The Thomas Merton Center.

The Center is located in Pittsburgh, not in Philadelphia, which likes to take credit for everything that happens in Pennsylvania. Not so.

Molly Rush
The Thomas Merton Center
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Black Mormons

To the editors:

John Seelye's review of *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon*, by Donna Hill (*TNR*, May 7) incorrectly states that blacks are excluded from membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Black male and many white male members for various reasons now do not hold the *priesthood* of the church. But the church teaches that all persons are literally spirit children of the same God and are all therefore brothers and sisters, equal regardless of whether the priesthood is held or not.

Blacks are welcomed into church membership and their numbers are growing.

D. E. Aspnes
Berkeley Heights, New Jersey

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President. People may well take this in stride if it ever happens; that does not mean it isn't worth avoiding if possible. It is the opponents of abolition who envision doomsday scenarios. They imagine an election so close that recount demands will paralyze the system. They see the Electoral College as a machine that turns close calls into undisputed victories. But to the extent that it does break deadlocks, it does so only through a willful suspension of logic. Why not have a constitutional provision that if the leading candidates are within 100,000 votes of each other, the Chief Justice will flip a coin? It would be simpler, and no more arbitrary.

Last week's editorial opposing universal voter registration shared a common spirit with the creators of the Electoral College, a feeling (to quote TRB again) that "the vote was too precious to pass around." The editorial makes much of the potential for fraud, but this is a red herring. It may well be that what is a sufficient safeguard against vote stealing in Minnesota and Wisconsin, where election-day registration already works just fine, is insufficient for Cook County, Illinois and Philadelphia. (Although if it would make vote-stealing easier, it is hard to understand why, according to *The Wall Street Journal*, the Cook County and Philadelphia Democratic machines adamantly oppose this reform.) If the safeguards in the current bill are insufficient, there are easy ways to tighten them. In Costa Rica (as this magazine reported on April 16), they dip your thumb in indelible ink after you have voted: cheap, quick and foolproof. Representative Stephen Solarz has proposed a more elegant version of this solution involving invisible ink and flashlights with ultraviolet screens. The flashlights would cost three million dollars and the ink $500,000 per election for the whole country—not an unreasonable price to reassure the cynics in Chicago, Philadelphia and other primitive settings.

But fraud is not what really motivates *TNR*'s opposition to election day registration. The editorial opposes making it easier to vote—or even encouraging people to vote—on the grounds that this cheapens the value or quality of voting. "Representative democracy should not be judged on the basis of how many people can be hectored, cajoled, shammed or trucked to the polls, but on how many citizens will take the trouble to properly qualify, inform themselves and willingly discharge the franchise." These words express an amorphous concept. If they appeared in a right-wing publication, I think I would know what they meant: PLU (People Like Us) make better voters than People Like Them, so why encourage people like them?

A smaller percentage of Americans take the trouble to vote than in any established democracy, and we are the only one that puts the burden of registering in advance on the voter. It wouldn't surprise me to be told, if such things could be tabulated, that fewer Americans are informed and concerned about public policy issues than the citizens of, say, a typical European democracy. By the logic of the editorial, therefore, we should pride ourselves on our low voting turnouts because they represent an exquisite refinement of the democratic process. But isn't it possible that indifference to public affairs is as much a result of low voting turnouts as it is a cause of them? People in Washington don't see the vote as an instrument of policymaking: they know they can have more impact on the government by writing a memo. But those outside Washington, who don't have the privilege of making policy every day, might take a keener interest in the government if they were in the habit of voting regularly.

Conservative opponents assert or imply that election day registrants will be people who don't know what's good for them or the country. What really motivates the conservatives, though, is the fear that people *do* know what's good for them, and that it isn't what's good for conservatives. Surely the prospect of millions of new liberal voters needn't frighten *The New Republic*.

M.E.K.

White House Watch

Ringing the Changes

Jimmy Carter's promises book, the massive summary of his campaign pledges put together for him after his election and made public at the White House in February with the confusing caution that it should not be read as "a statement by the President of his campaign promises," lists 31 items under the heading of government reorganization. Five of them concern the conglomerate called the Executive Office of the President and one of them, a judiciously edited version of what candidate Carter promised, refers to what is commonly and loosely termed "the White House staff." Carter promised during the campaign to cut the staff of the White House Office, the central entity in the service of Presidents, by 30 percent, and bolstered the promise with his once familiar but now seldom heard, "*you can depend on it.*" The echo in the summary reads in its entirety, "Reducing the size of the White House staff," without mention of 30 percent and depending on it.

Maybe, though, we and the (at last official count) 561 employees on that staff can depend on it. A reorganization study of the White House Office and of the overall Executive Office of the President was near completion in mid-June and the options and recommendations

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developed by the study were about ready for presentation to Carter. The 21 supervisors and analysts in the EOP study group were among some 180 people—nearly enough, incidentally, to have staffed the modest White House establishment that Carter dreamed of when he was a candidate—who are at work in the Office of Management and Budget on the many aspects of reorganization. Some 60 of them are employed in specific reorganization studies, the rest in study projects ranging from the government-wide processes of personnel recruitment and handling to the improvement of federal management, a subject and problem that have been occupying thousands of students and alleged experts since the time of Franklin Roosevelt. Before then, the assumption was that improvement was neither necessary nor possible.

The first of the reports to the President on the staffing, structure and uses of the Executive Office of the President and of its dominant component, the White House Office, is intended to present him options and recommendations that could, if he chooses, reduce his immediate staff by close to the promised 30 percent; abolish or remove from the White House establishment a few dormant units; and, in the judgment of the analysts who conducted the study and the senior advisers to the President who reviewed its results, materially improve the policy processes upon which he depends. Bertram D. (Bert) Lance, the Georgia banker and financer of Carter family enterprises whom the President installed as director of the Office of Management and Budget, and Harrison Wellford, who supervised Carter's pre-inaugural studies of White House organization and who at OMB possesses and may enjoy the title of "Executive Associate Director for Reorganization and Management," oversaw the EOP study and reviewed the report that resulted from it. A.D. Frazier, Jr., the director of the EOP study group, is a 33-year-old Atlanta banker who is nicknamed "All Day" because of his slavish working habits and was recruited by Lance. Two other Georgians on the study staff, John Beck of Albany (pronounced Allbinny) and Ms. Bobby Myers, a candidate for Master of Business Administration at Georgia State University in Atlanta, add up with Frazier to one-seventh of the total 21, a smaller than average proportion of Georgians in Carter and Lance enterprises in Washington.

The study staff was a mix of former government employees, academicians and management consultants with experience of one kind or another in governmental and corporate policy formulation and management. Frazier recruited three distinguished consultants—Richard Neustadt, author of the landmark *Presidential Power* and later books about the presidency; Professor Paul Lawrence of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, a specialist in organizational behavior; and Stephen Hess, a Nixon White House assistant whose recent book, *Organizing the Presidency*, impressed Carter with its argument that the drift since Franklin Roosevelt's presidency toward bigger and bigger White House establishments and more and more White House domination of the federal government should be halted. Neustadt, Lawrence and Hess said they thought well of the Frazier group's work. Hess, a Republican with no special bias toward Carter, said after reading the Frazier group reports bound in three eight-inch thick volumes: "I am impressed with the data that these people have collected in a very short time. They have asked the right questions and they have compiled a phenomenal amount of material that can be useful. The options that they have formulated and that I hope they are prepared to present to the President are real options. I didn't find that this is the usual sort of government report where option one is silly and option three is ridiculous and the President is left with only one choice. I think that even the least of the options would be an improvement on what's there now. So I would be very surprised if something useful doesn't come out of this exercise. How useful depends on how the President perceives his needs and the degree to which he is willing to bite the bullet. The reaction of the President and what he does—if he won't be very tough-minded in terms of his own staff, there is very little chance that the other reorganization studies and reports coming later will have much effect."

Harrison Wellford and his OMB staff in mid-June were drawing up a short-term (six months) and a long-term (two years) schedule of reorganization and related studies to be presented to Carter by July 15. Characteristically, he demanded an opportunity to approve or disapprove the studies to be undertaken on his behalf. Several, previously authorized by him, were already in progress. A report on how to coordinate and perhaps consolidate the several federal efforts dealing with domestic civil rights should get to the President soon after the EOP-WHO report does. If the administration's proposal to create a federal consumer advocacy agency dies in Congress, a study of ways to coordinate present consumer protection activities may get to him when or before he receives the White House organization report. The most extensive study in progress now, under Lance and Carter's new chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Alan Campbell, is a two-year, government-wide review of federal personnel recruitment and management.

The current interest is in the first of these reorganization studies and reports, the one concerning the President's immediate staff and his broader executive office. Nothing will happen, nothing will be decided, until *he* decides, until he makes his choices among the options and recommendations to be presented to him. So speculation as to what he may do about a report that he hasn't received at this writing is idle. But the study preceding the report and the impressions derived from officials and analysts who have had parts in the study or been consulted and told about it provide some useful

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insights into Carter's organizational problems and his likely approach to solving them.

It's accepted at the White House and OMB that Carter wants to keep his promise to cut his White House Office staff by 30 percent. But, raising a question that Carter patently didn't know existed when he used the figure, 30 percent of what? The 485 "permanent positions" authorized in the present federal budget? The (to Carter) horrifying total of 699 permanent and temporary positions filled in March, partly to handle the enormous accumulation of White House mail and the demand for federal jobs for Carter supporters? Or the total of 561 White House Office employees as of May 30? Inquirers are told that the options prepared for him suggest ways to cut the WHO staff by 20-25-30 percent, as the President chooses. The question, what percentage of what, remains unanswered. In any case the sort of numbers game typified by this paragraph obscures the major purpose of reorganization, which is or should be to improve the presidential policy process. According to Hess and others, the EOP study rightly concentrates on that and treats staff reduction as a secondary factor.

It's also accepted at the White House and OMB that two nearly dormant units in the umbrella EOP, the Council on International Economic Policy and the Office of Telecommunications Policy, both of them Nixon creations, will be abolished. If the current (fiscal 1977) personnel and dollar allocations for both agencies are cited, reductions of 73 jobs and $9.7 million in annual expense could be claimed. They have been dying of neglect and non-use for the past two years, they retain skeleton staffs and the real reductions would be small.

The discussions of what to do with the Domestic Council and the National Security Council staffs are of special interest. Consolidating the President's domestic and foreign advisory staffs into one policy support system has been kicked around in academic studies and books for years. The suggestion was revived and debated by the EOP analysts and the White House officials involved. The mere notion of vesting in one supreme director the power and influence of Stuart Eizenstat, the President's assistant for domestic affairs and director of the Domestic Council, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, the assistant for national security affairs and director of the NSC staff, defeated any thought of making consolidation more than a possibility for consideration in the far future. It may be noted here that the Domestic Council and NSC staffs are not in the White House Office or within the WHO staff totals that Carter has promised to reduce. Both councils are authorized by law and they could be altered, abolished or consolidated only by law. Their staffs (33 for the Domestic Council, 95 for NSC) are well under Ford and Nixon levels but they bring the actual number of people in the President's immediate service to 128 more than the usually mentioned WHO total.

If Carter goes along with recommendations prepared for him, he will ask Congress to approve abolition of the Domestic Council and its replacement with an Office of Policy Analysis under Eizenstat. In line with Carter's often declared desire for Cabinet rather than presidential government—a desire that he seems to forget when *his* wishes and actions are in question—the President will be admonished to admonish Eizenstat and his staff to regard themselves less as advisers to the President than as channels of information and judgement from the departments and agencies to the President.

John Osborne

We're going wild over bugs we've already eaten.

In Defense of DNA

by J. D. Watson

The fascination that the DNA molecule holds for so many has never, until recently, held the connotation of flirting with disaster. I, for one, have never given a moment's thought to whether my passion about the nature of the gene might be misplaced, much less a major danger to others or even to the future of mankind itself. Yet hardly a day now passes that I do not see the term "recombinant DNA" in some news

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article, and I am constantly being asked questions about the possible dangers of DNA research when I am in the company of students or even with our non-scientific friends. Answers to such questions are never simple, and now even less so. The vision of the hysterics has so peopled biological laboratories with monsters and super bugs that I often feel the discussion has descended to the realm of a surrealistic nightmare from which we will most surely soon awaken.

I am afraid, however, that it is not a nightmare from which we suffer, but a massive miscalculation in which we cried wolf without having seen or even heard one. Although from childhood we have been told that this is a silly way to proceed, we thought we were acting wisely because it was not an ordinary wolf we feared, one we could fight away with a club, but a creature so formidable that it could eat us up before we could even cry for help. The "super wolf" in this case is, of course, the new types of DNA molecules ("recombinant DNA") that can now be made in test tubes. The tools which have made such creatures possible is a newly discovered class of ordinary enzymes (the restriction enzymes) which make specific cuts in DNA molecules in a way that allows their genetic information to be specially rearranged. For example, the end product might be a new DNA molecule consisting of sections derived from both bacterial and human cells. Even more importantly, the means now exist to put these hybrid molecules back into bacteria, thereby creating new forms of bacteria capable of synthesizing human proteins together with their normal bacterial products.

If all goes as we now suspect it will, we should be able to produce, for example, human insulin in virtually inexhaustible quantities, as well as scores of other medically useful human proteins that are now in short supply. Naturally, many first-rate scientists have begun to play this game, for not only can we foresee a variety of important applied benefits, but recombinant DNA technology also provides a simple means to work out the detailed structure of the chromosomes of higher organisms. This opens up for the first time the possibility, for example, of detailed molecular characterization of the genes involved in the immunological response. This is a practical breakthrough of vast importance, and we can anticipate that in the next several years there will be a rash of discoveries which, without recombinant DNA, might not have been achieved within this century.

Simultaneously, however, with the arrival of this new technology, some of us began to wonder whether it might also have unexpectedly bad consequences, such as the creation of new types of organisms never yet subjected to the pressures of evolution, and which might have disease-causing potentials that we do not now have to face. In particular, we worried about (1) creation of bacteria selectively tailored to be resistant to all known antibiotics, or (2) insertion of the genes of tumor viruses into bacteria known to multiply in humans. Discussions first initiated at the 1973 Gordon Conference on Nucleic Acids were followed in April 1974 by the proposal by a number of molecular biologists, of which I was one, that there be a formal moratorium on these two types of experimentation until an international meeting could be held to discuss whether such experimentation did pose any plausible public health danger. It is important to stress that in making this proposal, we did not urge any restrictions on most other recombinant DNA research because we believed it would be just as safe as experiments we now conduct routinely with many forms of viruses and bacteria.

Because those of us who signed the moratorium proposal were respected scientists, not known for environmental or political kookiness, we were taken seriously. Eleven months later, though, some 150 persons came together at the Asilomar Conference Center in California to make further proposals. Instead of discussing whether the limited moratorium should be continued, the debate focused on how widely it should be extended. The operative rule among participants was that while one's own experimental system was safe, there was no reason to assume one's neighbor's was. From the start I felt most out of tune, and almost no one took seriously my opening argument that since there was no effective way to regulate experimentation with the known pathogenic bacteria and viruses, how could we come up with any logical rules for assuring protection from dangers that we could measure even less well?

As we all know too well today, the result of the meeting was a near unanimous consensus that we must act as if virtually all forms of recombinant DNA technology were potentially dangerous and use devices for the physical containment of the new bacteria. There was also agreement that the specific bacteria (*E. coli* strain K12) to be used for such experiments should be especially tailored genetically so that even if they escaped into the outside world, they would have no chance to colonize the human digestive tract. All in all, most everyone, including the press, thought the affair was a smashing success, and the world of molecular genetics would gain infinite kudos for the deliberate self-restraint with which it had moved ahead.

I, however, left Asilomar feeling very uneasy. I believed the whole affair was a hasty rush into unjustified bureaucratic roadblocks that would set back the course of legitimate science, but my view was considered by some to be eccentric irresponsibility. I did not then, nor do I now, believe that all recombinant DNA research is necessarily totally safe. The future automatically entails risks and uncertainty, and no sane person rushes in directions where he anticipates harm to himself or others. Instead, we try to adjust our actions to the magnitude of risk. When no measurement is possible because we have never faced a

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particular situation before, we must not assume the worst. If we did, we would do nothing at all.

Much too late, I have come to believe that the two types of experiments under the original moratorium pose no real threat to the general public. Much too quickly, we concluded that it was dangerous to make bacteria which are resistant to many antibiotics or which *can* synthesize a deadly poison even though they normally don't. Instead, we should have focused upon the fact that most, if not all, bacterial species already exchange DNA with each other in nature—for example, through the infection process. Thus, if through recombinant DNA technology, we were to make an *E. coli* strain that, say, makes the cholera toxin, we are very likely repeating what nature has done many times in the past. There is every reason to believe that even if it did escape from the laboratory it would not pose any major public health threat. Even less convincing, especially in retrospect, were the arguments against putting the genes of tumor viruses into laboratory strains of bacteria. The argument here was that such cancer-gene-bearing bacteria might accidently colonize parts of the human body, releasing cancer-causing DNA that might pass into our cells and initiate a cancer. By the time of Asilomar, however, we already realized that many, if not all, of the so-called DNA tumor viruses were in fact ordinary animal viruses that routinely infect most of us early in life. By still unknown means, they remain latent in our bodies for the remainder of our lives, usually only expressing themselves as disease-causing agents under various physical conditions (such as Herpes virus-induced cold sores). So, the danger we face from our intestinal bacteria acquiring a little cancer virus DNA must be negligible compared to that we face every time we are infected with any of the innumerable DNA-containing viruses.

Why, then, did many first-rate scientists become upset at the thought that Paul Berg and his Stanford students wanted to place the genetic material from SV40 (a potentially cancer-causing monkey virus) within a strain of *E. coli*, called K12, known not to effectively colonize the human gut? I and many others, including finally Berg himself, took the matter seriously enough to initiate the chain of events that inexorably led to the regulatory mood at Asilomar. The best explanation for our intellectual sloppiness was suggested to me by Governor Jerry Brown of California who, after listening to me talk about recombinant DNA, asked me whether we had gotten into this mess because of "liberal guilt." It was this, and a paranoia about cancer, that affects most all of us.

The heart of our trouble comes not from silly left-wing agitation but from the fact that the molecular genetics establishment at Asilomar put the weight of its authority behind guidelines implying we could honestly predict that one form of recombinant DNA experimentation might carry more potential danger than another. In contrast, I, for one, saw no way to decide whether work on fruit fly DNA, or yeast DNA, or mouse DNA should be more or less restricted, if at all, and so found the Asilomar experience an exercise in the theater of the absurd. Particularly misguided was the placing of work with human DNA in the highest potential risk category, thereby restricting it to biological warfare-like facilities and insuring that almost no one in pure research could work with it. Yet this is a DNA to which our ordinary intestinal bacteria must be constantly exposed, for it is very hard to imagine that none of the human DNA released from the normal sloughing-off of dead gut cells does not occasionally enter neighboring bacterial cells and become integrated into their DNA.

The almost unanimous final consensus at Asilomar reflected oft-repeated speculation that human DNA might carry the genes of the so-called RNA tumor viruses. There is, in fact, no real understanding of why such cells harbor potential sources of trouble. No enlightened person, liberal or otherwise, would want responsibility for the slightest chance of increasing the incidence of human cancer. But, we should have considered that all vertebrate cells most likely carry many such genes as normal genetic components. Their real function must not be to cause cancer, and we should not have panicked about potential exposure to DNA sequences which we already possess.

Fortunately, there are now second thoughts about the matter, and there are efforts within the National Institutes of Health to downgrade the hysteria over test-tube-transferred human DNA. However, it will not be easy to convince people that anything has really changed, and the whole effort to rehabilitate human DNA must be seen by many as an attempt to place personal ambition ahead of the public good.

To say the least, we are in a rotten mess. We face the prospect that our miserable guidelines will be enacted into formal laws. And, their very existence creates fears that DNA research carries a profound threat to human existence. It does not help that some of our "best and brightest" say to each other that they now know that Asilomar was a tactical mistake, but then pop off to Washington to flatter legislators into thinking they are acting wisely in devoting massive attention to DNA.

Instead of going back to the question which should have dominated the Asilomar gathering—Is there a reason for formal guidelines?—our Congressmen are being asked to decide between two silly alternatives—(1) to either formalize the Asilomar nonsense at the

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level of the now-current NIH guidelines, and in so doing create another regulatory bureaucracy that will not only cost piles of money but legitimize a control over the direction of science that we have not seen since the Middle Ages, or (2) taking seriously the most extensive doomsday scenarios, effectively stop all recombinant DNA research. In fact, I do not know of any authority on infectious disease who takes the recombinant DNA doomsday scenario seriously.

So you might expect that our Congressmen would be deluged with mail from angry molecular biologists opposing either option. Instead, the dominant establishment attitude is that the matter is already so out of control that our only concern should be to contain our regulatory Frankenstein before it threatens all of biological research—before, for example, we have to obtain a "memorandum of understanding" every time we want to work with a new human cell line. This defeatist mood assumes that some federal law restricting recombinant DNA research is bound to come, and we should focus our efforts on seeing to it that it takes precedence over local laws. We should remember, however, that even a "reasonable" law that talks only about recombinant DNA is a perfect setup for a new round of local initiatives—say, to protect New Haven from unregulated work at Yale with potential human tumor viruses. And if that happens, as with the recombinant DNA story, we are likely to find that our opposition is for the most part led, not by individuals with any deep knowledge of or even fear of our work, but by persons who, for a myriad of reasons, do not like the fruits of science, if not of the intellect, and see us as the most vulnerable foe.

I thus believe that the ostrich-like approach of most molecular biologists to the events of the past two years can only lead to much more restrictive action against our freedom, not only to do good science, but to find the facts that may be necessary for the survival of our by now inherently advanced societies. While by now I find almost universal agreement among leading molecular biologists that the guidelines are a total farce, I sense that not one yet feels emotionally equal to the task of telling Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Paul Rogers, chairmen of Congress's health subcommittees. Equally bad, by now so many top figures in our national scientific and health bureaucracy have defended the guidelines that, as with the Vietnam fiasco, none is willing to admit that he has been a naive fool. They are already being propelled by the momentum of their past nonsense to adopt their own form of the Cambodian escalation by trying to have the American guidelines enforced throughout the world.

Barring a miracle of enlightenment in Washington, in the White House if not in Congress, I fear that DNA research is condemned to be imprisoned in chains forged by research experts themselves. If the worst does occur in the United States, our only hope can be that Europe and the Eastern Bloc will not follow our trail of madness. Perhaps when we see that no Andromeda strain or doomsday bug has been produced abroad, but that progress continues to be made, the United States will resume free scientific inquiry.

Jimmy Carter complicates Hussein's 25th anniversary.

The Other Jubilee

by David Pryce-Jones

King Hussein has now been on the throne of Jordan for 25 years and that is a jubilee altogether more remarkable than Queen Elizabeth's. His has been a perilous reign, so perilous that it has been easy at any moment to mark the King down for the scrapheap of history. Jordan, so the argument has run, was never much more than a desert emirate concocted by the British Colonial Office when it had already lost its touch. There has never been, and never will be, a sound economic basis for this state whose sole resources are phosphates and tourism, and which has only one port, Aqaba on the Red Sea, alongside Israel's Eilat, where everything is better handled. Who needs kings anyhow? Pan-Arabism, or Nasserism, or Palestinians, or some such progressive notion is invariably about to cook the King's goose.

In spite of everything, the King continues to survive his neighbors, his enemies, and—sometimes most dangerous of all—his friends. He has survived three wars, one civil war, several incursions by Syrian, Iraqi

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or Saudi forces, and at least three serious coups. In 1958 he was warned what to fear, when his cousin King Faisal of Iraq was brutally butchered along with that whole branch of the Hashemite family, and their corpses then were degraded. Two Jordanian chiefs of staff have plotted against the King, and so has one prime minister. Two prime ministers, Hazza Majali and Wasfi Tell, have been murdered in office. Ten, or by some counts 12, assassination attempts have been made on the King's person, and more than once he has picked up side-arms to shoot his way out of a tight corner. And still he comes up smiling. His position would long have been intolerable if he were merely an imposed or antique figurehead. His courage and style are admired in Jordan, and in general his popularity is genuine, which is the point overlooked by the armchair diplomats who keep on writing him off. This monarchy was never as fragile as it seems.

Jordan, to be sure, is an autocracy. Its parliament is designed to express the wishes of the ruler, not the electorate, which is limited strictly to men with property qualifications. There is also a most efficient police and intelligence apparatus, American-aided, and its chief, Mohamed Rasoul Kilani, became a bogey in Palestinian myth. Without this internal security system, the King might indeed have foundered in one of the endless secret plots against him, but it is not—it does not need to be—an engine of oppression as for instance the Syrian Deuxième Bureau is, or as Nasser's police was. By the standards of the region, Jordan is merciful and even relaxed. People do not vanish there as in Iraq, nor are they publicly executed, nor are their limbs lopped by the hangman as in Saudi Arabia or Libya.

The King has his people, of course—the Bedouin, or tribesmen of what is Transjordan proper, the Adwan, the Anizeh, the Howeitat, the Beni Sakhr, in all the ramifications of nomadic genealogy and lore which Western travelers have so romanticized. Some of these tribes enjoyed ancient and hereditary feuds which have not been quite extinguished by a modern policy of urban settlement, but the King is their man. He counts as one of them, a great-grandson of the Sherif of Mecca, descendant of the Prophet. It is a bit of a fiction to see King Hussein as a desert Arab when his education at Harrow and Sandhurst made a decent English public schoolboy of him, but all the same it is a fiction which works to give him a constituency.

The Palestinians, around half a million of them (census figures are unreliable), are outnumbered three or four to one by the Bedouin, and they exist in Jordan on tolerance, a fact of which they need no reminding. Historically the way Jordan assumed guardianship for Palestinians is clear. In 1948, as the British Mandate was limping to its sorry end, the Foreign Office under Ernest Bevin turned a blind eye when King Abdullah, Hussein's grandfather, invaded Palestine, or the West Bank, to be precise—that part of the country which the United Nations had voted to partition and allot to the Palestinians as their independent state, with Israel similarly established alongside. King Abdullah had no love for the Palestinians, nor hatred for the Israelis, for that matter, but he had been brought up in the old school which taught that a man ruled what he could conquer and hold. With the exception of Britain, the world did not sanction this annexation of the West Bank. King Abdullah certainly aggrandized his territory but it proved, frankly, not worth the trouble, and soon cost him his life. The West Bank was a rump, its peasant population shattered out of their ways, and swollen by refugees from the fighting.

In order to come to terms with circumstances, West Bankers and refugees alike were given Jordanian citizenship, they could enroll in the army and the bureaucracy. Some of them did well in commerce. Some made fortunes. Some rose in the King's service to the highest offices—the Rifai family, his intimate and faithful friends, are originally Palestinians from Safed, and his late wife Alia Tuqan belonged to one of the most notable familes of Nablus. But disturbances on the West Bank were frequent and perhaps inevitable, especially when fomented from outside. Nasser built his early career by arousing expectations in these poor people. To counteract him, the King did once experiment in democratic elections, which threw up as prime minister Suleiman Nabulsi, a Palestinian and a rich man who veiled his power-urge by describing it as left-wing. The resulting crisis, with Nasser and the Russians agog in the wings, was perhaps the closest of Hussein's many shaves, and he is not likely to risk experiences of the kind again. By and large, the Palestinians were governed firmly but not too unfairly between 1948 and 1967. Then the Six Day War put an end to King Abdullah's patchwork. With the Israelis left in possession of the West Bank, Greater Jordan was over and done with. In a sense Hussein was freed from his grandfather's ambition.

For Hussein to see it in that perspective, it scarcely need be said, is hard. To the maintaining of his inheritance, he brings emotion. While still a teenager, he had the trauma of witnessing his grandfather's murder by agents of the Mufti of Jerusalem. A conventional man in any case, he feels under family obligation toward the West Bank. As the Six Day War opened, he chose not to listen to Israeli warnings to stay out of hostilities. In this he was really the victim of Nasser, who kept him in the dark, as well as of his own temperament. *Sharafa*—that concept of honor in which the Arab mind bogs down with all manner of military fantasy—dictated that he enter a war which could lead only to ruin. Had he remained inactive, he would have had a crisis of confidence in Jordan only for those few tumultuous days, at the end of which Nasser's destructive lies and consequent humiliation would have been evident. The King could have been the statesman

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of the hour, with the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem still his and intact, and the Palestinian question would have taken a very different course these last 10 years.

On the face of it this was the most painful misjudgment of the reign. Yet as so often happens, things may have worked out unexpectedly for the good, in that Hussein was obliged thereby to have no share whatever in the Palestine national movement. The Palestine Liberation Organization, Fatah, Saiqa, the multifarious loggerhead groupings, were so many instruments variously forged by Egypt, Syria and other Arab states to advance their ends when their armies could no longer do so in the aftermath of 1967. The Palestinians were there to be paid and exploited as mercenaries. But Jordan was the base for these shallow intrigues. Jordan, not Israel, was vulnerable. From 1967 to 1970 Yasser Arafat and George Habash and Yahya Hammoudia and Naif Hawatmeh had it their separate ways in Amman. They looked powers in the land, and were reported as such by Westerners who ought to have known better. In fact they were operatives for their paymasters, and had behind them no mass support.

When King Hussein finally moved against the PLO and the PFLP in the events of Black September, he proved what an artifact the Palestinian national movement was. Here was the chance of a Palestinian uprising, indeed for taking over the whole country, if some Western observers were to be believed, but instead the Palestinians in Jordan, the rich and the refugees alike, remained loyal to the King. In part they were little motivated against him; in part, they were afraid of the Bedouin. Some months beforehand, I had been in Zerqa, where the army has its main barracks, and I remember a conversation with Arab Legionnaires in which they were contemptuous of the Palestinians as faint-hearts who had fled their homeland when they should have stayed and fought the Israelis like men. To the Bedouin, the Palestinians have only themselves to blame, and had better cause no more trouble. It was said that the King's mind was wonderfully concentrated for him when the Beni Sakhr chiefs arrived in a deputation to ask him to put the Palestinians in their place, or be thrown out in favor of someone who would.

The loss of the West Bank, then, cemented traditional tribal Jordan. The Israelis had acquired the troublesome onus of dealing with the West Bank, and it may be doubted that they could ever have done so without Jordanian acquiescence, which was in the form of the Open Bridges policy. By means of the open bridges between Israeli-occupied territory and Jordan, the West Bankers were able to buy and sell in their established markets and in general to live as normally as possible. Without such a safety valve, grievances would almost certainly have flared into non-cooperation and civil disobedience and violence. But the policy for which Israel tends to receive credit has really depended for its smoothness upon Jordan, which could have closed the bridges at any time, thus emphasizing the claustrophobia, and precipitating reactions against the Israelis, leading to curfews, martial law and horrors all too readily imagined. King Hussein has had the ultimate responsibility for the comparative amicability of Israelis and Arabs on the West Bank, and he has not abused it.

So far Israeli and Jordanian interests have coincided. The net effect has been to underline how neither party really wants the West Bank badly enough to be aggressive about it—we will have to see about the Likud party—but cannot think how to shed the burden gracefully. The King continues to pay salaries to teachers and administrators there, which is only bidding for their loyalties just in case a solution one day should turn upon plebiscites or public opinion, and their votes would be handy. It's the stopgap that endures, but all the same this West Bank limbo can hardly last forever and ever, amen. In the vacuum the PLO operates. Arafat wants the West Bank badly. He wants whatever is going, and it is altogether convenient to suppose that he and the concept of a Palestinian homeland can be tidied away simultaneously. Neither Syria nor Egypt believe in such a homeland, but pay lip-service to the idea in order to gloss over how they actually treat the Palestinians. If a Palestinian homeland were to be created, both Egypt and Syria would not cease from conspiring until one or the other controlled it. Syrian support for a homeland for Palestinians is glaringly self-seeking in the light of Syrian elimination of what little vestiges of free maneuvering the PLO had in Lebanon.

It is something quite else when an American president comes out recommending a Palestinian homeland. That President Carter muffed it and had to backtrack into the old mumblings about Resolutions 242 and 338 means perhaps that speaking with two tongues is not confined to the White House of the Nixon era. But President Carter had received King Hussein in Washington earlier in the year and seems to have given him no clue to the blow to expect. The King has been caught by surprise that the Americans feel so free to dispose of a West Bank which is still nominally his. To Amman, it appears as though the King has been deliberately and senselessly rebuffed and he is furious at the loss of face.

A Palestinian homeland, if it were to be realized in Washington or Geneva or anywhere, would be understood in Jordan as approval by the powers that be of anti-Hussein steps. The verdict of Black September would be queried by higher authority. The immediate consequence of ensuing Palestinian agitation would be to unleash the Bedouin to settle the score finally. When extremists, or even well-wishers, advocate that Jordan should become a Palestinian state, or endow its Palestinians with autonomy in some form, they ignore

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that the Bedouin have the arms and the will to go massacring.

Unwisely encouraged by this turn in American policy, Yasser Arafat has seen his chance, and late last month he offered to meet King Hussein in Amman. Presumably he wished to impress upon the King how sober the American-sponsored Palestinian homeland would be. The King naturally refused the indignity of having Arafat gloating about how the Americans, of all people, have given him one more throw of the dice. Nor is this the only pressure upon the King. The Syrians have been proposing a formal alliance with Jordan, which has been rejected as though it were an invitation from a boa constrictor. Since the death of their preposterously bigoted King Faisal, the Saudis have recognized the common interests of Israel and Jordan in preserving the *status quo* in a Middle East where the Russians are trying everything to expand their influence. But then the Saudis have a view of politics at all levels as conspiracy by any other name, and so they also pay the PLO as well as making good the deficits of the Jordanian budget. Their signals to Amman are confused and confusing.

Among other signs of the times is a bizarre rumor about the King's suspicion that Western intelligence agents contrived the helicopter crash in which Queen Alia was killed, the purpose supposedly being to expose Jordanian isolation. This is a perfect illustration of the Arab literary device of inventing a false story for the sake of the outlook it truthfully crystallizes. The King also refused to allow the BBC to make a film celebrating his silver jubilee and this is interpreted as disgust and scorn against the West following President Carter's homeland speech. Meanwhile a Soviet military mission arrived in Amman at the end of May.

The situation is reminiscent of the period between the Suez Campaign and the build-up to the Six Day War. In 1956 President Eisenhower compelled the Israelis to withdraw, and the Arabs were therefore spared responsibility for their actions, and in effect Nasser was encouraged into actions which could only be hostile to American interests. This is happening again, but with the Palestinians. President Carter's Palestinian homeland pronouncement is not just an inept betrayal of an ally but an Eisenhower-like refusal to accept that the Palestinian national movement, like Nasserism before it, by its behavior has unfitted itself for power in the eyes of Arabs who must live with it. That is how to prepare bloodshed.

The Syrian-Egyptian tangle is also much as it was in the early '60s, though Hussein can rejoice that Nasser is no longer plaguing him. But he has in Hafez Assad a master-conspirator who is likely to dominate the next stage of his reign as Nasser did its formative years. Israel has one further option not available in those years, in that it is now in a position to annex the West Bank. If President Carter keeps on moralizing off the point, if Hussein were ever to see advantage in closing the Jordan bridges, the Israel of Menahem Begin might be provoked to repeat exactly the mistake of King Abdullah, and hope to digest what is indigestable. That would be a ridiculous irony, but who knows? It might guarantee Hussein's Golden Jubilee. The years till then will be neither dull nor trivial for him.

Tend the roots, but remember the tree.

The Limits of Ethnicity

by Irving Howe

Americans have often defined themselves through an unwillingness to define themselves. In the work of our greatest writers, notably Melville and Whitman, the refusal to succumb to fixity of definition comes to seem a cultural signature.

In opposition there has arisen a native industry of America-definers who offer a maddening plenitude of answers. But people in a hurry with answers have usually not even heard the questions. And finally it all comes to the same thing: many answers equal no answer.

All through the 19th century there was a lot of talk in America about our national character, our unique emerging culture, our new kind of man. Most of it was no more than talk. But the real cultures of America were meanwhile being built up as *regional* cultures, defining themselves apart from and sometimes in

Irving Howe was awarded the 1976 National Book Award in history for *World of Our Fathers*.

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opposition to the idea of a single national culture. Our best writers, enraptured with particularities of speech and place, felt that in local custom they might find an essence of the new nation.

With time, the regions came to be replaced by immigrant communities. The hetereogeneity of 19th century America, consisting of regions often at considerable physical and spiritual distance from one another, was followed by the hetereogeneity of industrial America, consisting of immigrant subcultures, plebeian and urban, which clung to some indeterminate condition between the remembered Old Country and the not-so-friendly New World.

The most recent sign of American hetereogeneity has been a turn toward ethnicity. In part, this is mere fashion concocted by TV, publicity and other agencies of deceit. In part, it releases deep impulses of yearning. No one quite knows what ethnicity means: that is why it's so useful a term. For if we will not define ourselves as Americans, we can at least define ourself as fractional or hyphenated Americans, making of that hardy hyphen a kind of see-saw of cultural ambivalence. Or we will define ourselves as pre-Americans, claiming recognition for what can barely still be recognized in us—the heritage of European nationhood and culture.

There are plenty of symptoms. There is my own recent book about immigrant Jews, written, I must plead, in innocence of the uses to which it may be put. There is another recent book about the ordeal of black slaves and the journey that one of their descendants made back home. No doubt there will be many more books on such themes, some of them serious and others devoted to making a quick buck.

It is all astonishing. In a country long devoted to dulling the sense of the historical past and denying the continuity of experience from Europe to America; in a country where the young can hardly remember the name of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and are by no means sure in which century World War I was fought, or who fought in it—in this very country groups of people now seek to define themselves through a deliberate exclusion from the dominant native stock which, only yesterday, had been taking pains to exclude them. These ethnic groups now turn back—and as they nervously insist, "with pride"—to look for fragments of a racial or national or religious identity that moves them to the extent that it is no longer available. Perhaps, also, *because* it is no longer available.

Some of this turning-back strikes me as a last hurrah of nostalgia. Each day, necessarily, it keeps getting weaker and sillier. Traveling around the country recently, I encountered middle-class Jewish ladies intent on discovering their family genealogies. I suggested to them, not very graciously, that if they were serious they would first try to learn their people's history and then they might see that it hardly mattered whether they came from the Goldbergs of eastern Poland or the Goldbergs of the western Ukraine. Other segments of the Jewish community are turning back to the immigrant experience. Some time ago I attended a pageant in an eastern city recreating the Lower East Side: pushcarts, onion rolls, flexibly-priced suits, etc. Someone asked me whether anything was missing and I answered, again not very graciously, that a touch of reality might have been added by a tubercular garment worker spitting blood from his years of exhaustion in a sweat shop.

Sentimentalism is the besetting sin of the Jewish turn to ethnicity, a sentimentalism that would erase memories of ugliness and pathology, disputation and radicalism. Among the blacks things are different. Having been deprived of their history in more brutal ways than anyone else in our society, they have to engage in more extreme measures to retrieve it. Still, one wonders whether some recent assertions of roots are a conquest of history or an improvisation of myth. Tens of thousands of black Americans are expected to be visiting Gambia this summer, and while that is likely to be a boon for the tourist industry of a country that needs every break it can get, one is less certain about what it will do for the tourists. Will it lead to a growing moral strength with which to confront American realities or will it constitute a pleasant style of evasion?

Still, I would be the last to deny that there are serious meanings behind ethnic nostalgia. We are all aware that our ties with the European past grow increasingly feeble. Yet we feel uneasy before the prospect of becoming "just Americans." We feel uneasy before the prospect of becoming as indistinguishable from one another as our motel rooms are, or as flavorless and mass-produced as the bread many of us eat.

We are losing the passions, the words, the customs of the old countries. Having savored the richness of bilingualism, we find it distressing to be reduced to one language—at most. And so we reach back, clumsily, to a past we know cannot be regained.

To the grandeur of the America idea we want to connect the historical substance of the Jewish or black or Slavic experience. All of these subcultures add a little flavor to modern American life, which certainly can use it. Walk into Little Italy and you feel an enclosingness of human bonds that you're not likely to feel in many other parts of New York City. Watch the Greek-Americans parade on Fifth Avenue, with their garish floats evoking symbols not many of the paraders could identify, and you feel, well, let them cling to as much of their past as they can. And as for black culture as an avenue for difference in America—one that brings us into greater sadness and suffering than Americans can usually confront—that has by now become a virtual cliche of our culture and thereby properly subject to skepticism by blacks themselves.

The famous melting-pot of American society could grow very hot, indeed, too hot for those being melted.

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Usually it was the immigrants and their children who were the meltees, while the temperature was being regulated by the WASP meltors. So by now many of us are rightly suspicious about easy notions concerning cultural assimilation, what might be called the bleaching of America. Some of us remember with discomfort our days in high school when well intentioned but willful teachers tried to smooth the Jewish creases out of our speech and our psyches. We don't want to be smoothed out—at least entirely, at least not yet. We don't want to yield ourselves completely to that "destruction of memories" which the great sociologist, W. I. Thomas, once said was the essence of the Americanizing process

Neither should we succumb to the current uncritical glorification of ethnicity. The ethnic impulse necessarily carries with it dangers of parochialism: the smugness of snug streets as against the perilous visions of large cities, the indulgent celebration of habitual ways simply because they are habitual. The ethnic community always runs the danger that it is not really preserving the riches of an old-world culture; it is merely clinging to some scraps and debris of that culture which were brought across the ocean. At a time when the fate of mankind is increasingly, for better or worse, an *international* fate, the ethnic community too often shuts its eyes or buries it head while clinging anxiously to received customs—as if there were no more important things in the world than customs!

When one thinks a little about the culture of our time, the force of these cautions regarding ethnicity is magnified. At its best and most troubling modernist expression, the culture of the 20th century has broken past borders of nationhood, race and speech. There is a characteristic pattern here: province runs smack against metropolis, decaying tradition jostles metropolitan experiment—and the result is that brilliant nervousness, that fierce and restless probing we identify with modernist culture. Cavafy from the streets of Alexandria, Faulkner from the hills and villages of Mississippi, Sholom Aleichem from the east European *shtetl*, Eliot from a provincial midwestern city, Joyce from the rigid precincts of Dublin—our greatest 20th century writers leave behind them, though finally they remain deeply stamped by, the limitations of the provincial. The province, the ethnic nest, remains the point from which everything begins and without which, probably, it could not begin; but the province, the ethnic nest, is not enough, it must be transcended.

Finally, however, the great weakness of the turn to ethnicity is that it misreads or ignores the realities of power in America. The central problems of our society have to do, not with ethnic groupings, but with economic policy, social rule, class relations. They have to do with vast inequities of wealth, with the shameful neglect of a growing class of subproletarians, with the readiness of policy-makers to tolerate high levels of unemployment. They have to do with "the crisis of the cities," a polite phrase masking a terrible reality—the willingness of this country to dump millions of black (and white) poor into the decaying shells of once thriving cities.

Toward problems of this kind and magnitude, what answers can ethnicity offer? Very weak ones, I fear. Common action by the poor, major movements for social change require alignments that move past ethnic divisions. They require a tougher perception of the nature of American society than the ethnic impulse usually enables. The dominant powers of American society would be perfectly delighted if, for example, American blacks were to divert themselves over the next 10 or 20 years in seeking their roots in distant Africa, especially if this meant that blacks would thereby lessen their pressure for the jobs, the housing, the opportunities they need here. (Who can say with any assurance that the vivid, if coarse, evocation of the black ordeal in the recent TV version of *Roots* did very much, or anything at all, to persuade white Americans that this society owes a debt to its black minority? Who can say that it raised the consciousness of TV viewers regarding current social policy rather than giving them a momentary *frisson*, an inexpensive thrill of horror?) Social militancy may not always be undermined, social solidarity may not always be threatened, by ethnic or racial consciousness; but too often, in the past, they have been.

In principle, is there any reason why discovering that "black is beautiful" shouldn't lead to the conclusion, "well, if we're beautiful, or even if we're not, we deserve a bigger share of the pie than America has thus far let us get"? No, of course not—in principle. Nor is there any preordained reason why the white ethnic groups could not move from a reconquest of identity to union with other plebeian communities in behalf of shared needs, thereby helping a little to right the wrongs of our society.

This is not just a problem in social strategy; it has also to do with human awareness and self-definition. We want to remain, for the little time that we can, whatever it was that we were before they started pressurizing us in those melting pots. So let's try, even if the historical odds are against us. But there is also another moral possibility, one that we call in Yiddish being or becoming a *mensch*. The word suggests a vision of humanity or humaneness; it serves as a norm, a possibility beckoning us. You don't have to be Jewish (or non-Jewish), you don't have to be white (or black) in order to be a *mensch*. Keeping one eye upon the fading past and the other on the unclear future, enlarging ethnic into ethic, you can become a man or woman of the world, even as you remember, perhaps because you remember, the tongue your grandfather and grandmother spoke in, though in fact the words themselves are fading from memory.

This is adapted from a commencement address at Queens College.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

Effi Briest
(New Yorker)

This installment of the Rainer Werner Fassbinder report is happy. (He's the prolific young German director—30 films by age 32—discussed three weeks ago.) Fassbinder's film (1974) of Theodor Fontane's novel is beautiful. It renders the book as fully and texturally as could be possible in 140 minutes, and it's a work in and of itself, intrinsically cinematic. What's more, it shows that Fassbinder is probably going to keep astonishing us.

One good way to be impressed with *Effi Briest* is to see *Jail Bait* first, though vice versa is just as useful. The film made from the Kroetz play is hard and violent, full of new German proletarian despair and compensatory fury. This latest film is set at the turn of the century and deals with nests of gentlefolk.

Fontane was a famous Berlin theater critic (largely responsible for the initial reception of Gerhart Hauptmann) who didn't begin writing fiction until he was almost 60. A number of his novels deal with women in his society; *Effi Briest*, accounted the finest of these, was published in 1894 when Fontane was 74. It tells of the arranged marriage of the 17-year-old title character, daughter of a comfortable bourgeois couple living near Berlin, to an aristocrat 20 years older, who takes her to live in a small Baltic town. The fundamental theme of the novel is the new Germany: the product of Bismarck whose Prussia had unified the German states, had won three wars, and whose creation had established itself stiffly across the top of Europe. The specific story is of a girl fixed in a society increasingly satisfied with itself, its traditions, its idea of honor, its conviction that it might well last forever: but a girl also affected, even if not consciously or intellectually, by a century of growing awareness of self, self's rights and dangers. The results for her are, of course, sad. *Effi Briest* doesn't have the tragic dimensions of *Madame Bovary* or of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* because Effi is much more a victim than a rebel, but her extramarital affair is fated from the start and so is her sorry finish.

From the social view the most striking aspect of the story—and Fassbinder handles it superbly—is that Effi's husband insists on dueling his wife's lover six years after the affair has stopped, long after they have left the Baltic for Berlin. He accidentally discovers some old letters and, despite the happiness of their marriage before and since the affair, he insists on raking up the matter and fighting the duel—as a debt to society, to self-esteem, to esteem in the eyes of the one friend (male) in whom he has confided. This monstrous obligation, in the face of reason, dramatizes Fontane's view of his society's code.

After the duel, in which the lover is killed, Effi is cast out. Virtually isolated from her child, she goes back at last to live with her parents, who accept her but without forgiveness. Soon she dies.

Fassbinder catches the last scene of the novel exquisitely. Effi's parents are having coffee in their garden. The camera views them from some distance. They are in the upper right portion of the frame; in the lower left is the swing on which we once saw the young Effi. The camera never moves. The parents talk calmly about how their old dog lies all the time on Effi's gravestone in that garden. At last the mother wonders whether she herself wasn't somewhat to blame in the matter, whether she married Effi off too young. The father, sipping, asks her not to go on. "That is *too* big a subject," he says. They continue to sit quietly and sip; the camera doesn't move. After ten seconds or so, fadeout.

The fadeouts all through the picture constitute a visual theme. Every fade is to white, not black—a "burn to white," as the trade more properly puts it. These fadeouts convey a feeling of the age's worship of purity, something like the feeling in the flashbacks of Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*. The clothes and rooms provide the setting for this veneration. (The art direction is by Kurt Raab, who has collaborated on scripts with Fassbinder and has acted in some of his films.) But that ribbon of white, running through, ties it all together subtly.

The photography by Jürgen Jürges and Dietrich Lohmann is soft and gentle black-and-white, possibly modeled on the work that Raoul Coutard did in *Jules and Jim*. Fassbinder's screenplay is a small marvel of selection, distillation, arrangement. He uses voice-over—as Truffaut did in *Jules and Jim*—not only to condense action but to remind us cinematically that we are watching a novel, a risky but neatly accomplished effect. Unlike Truffaut, he has no ear for music. Again he has chosen one chunk—this time from a Saint-Saëns violin piece—and repeats it occasionally.

As for that sequence leading up to the duel: while the husband discusses the matter with his friend, debating whether to pursue the six-year-old offense, their conversations are intercut with shots of the journey back from Berlin to the Baltic town, telling us that the matter under discussion is already settled and leading right into the duel itself.

The death of the lover there epitomizes the tone that Fassbinder has set for his actors. Fontane tells us that "a look of pain that seemed somehow touched with friendliness" touches the face of the man just before he dies; but on the face of this actor there is nothing but acceptance. Throughout the film the register of emotion is cool. Feelings are perfectly credible, but always *portrayed* rather than meant to move us. Perhaps Fassbinder wanted to "contain" the story, to keep it from seeming too purply; and/or it may have been to convey, as with the dying duellist, a sense of acceptance, of actors-in-life

Films Worth Seeing

Annie Hall. Woody Allen's best film so far—which means mostly unobtrusive direction, mostly successful gags about neurotic sex and love.

Harlan County, USA. Barbara Kopple's fine documentary about coal miners today. At last, a really merited Academy Award.

Jail Bait. The teeming R.W. Fassbinder deals disturbingly with a 14-year-old German girl's violent love affair, and other violence. Strong but pointedly so.

We All Loved Each Other So Much. Italian male bonding. Three friends after WWII. Some hokum, considerable sentimental fun.

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playing the roles to which fate and society have assigned them. (Something I haven't seen since the films of Miklós Jancsó.) The one hot exception is Effi's outburst after her daughter visits her in her lodgings, when the child, under her father's instruction, behaves stiffly toward her disgraced mother. Otherwise, emotion is carefully sculpted at an esthetic distance.

And Fassbinder's handling of the actors' movements, his compositions, support this tone. Although he never strains realism, we realize more and more clearly that the realism is being delicately abstracted. People are positioned; looks are orchestrated; gestures are timed; and all this goes just to the edge of verism, almost into ballet. More, he uses long exterior travelling shots, with dialogue or voice over, to give the sense of motion through time.

No actor is asked for much more than his or her particular presence, fully exploited, and all are perfect components of the whole. Hanna Schygulla is Effi, attractive and uncomprehending. (Ensemble note: in *Jail Bait* Schygulla has the small role of a gynecologist. Eva Mattes, who plays the lead in *Jail Bait*, has a 30-second part in this picture as a girlhood friend of Effi's.) The lover is Ulli Lommel, who is also a film director. The husband's friend is the handsome Karl-Heinz Böhm, son of the conductor Karl Böhm.

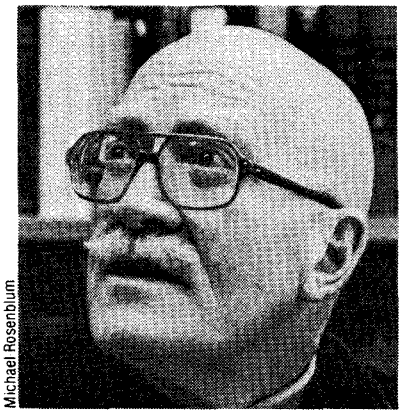
I have lately seen two earlier Fassbinder films, *Katzelmacher* and *Gods of the Plague*, both his original scripts, both tedious, both filmic derivations of Godard and Rivette. His best films that I know are those made from other people's writing—his own scripts but other people's organisms.

So far there is no definable Fassbinder directorial style in the films I've seen. On the other hand I can think of no other director who could have made two such good films as *Jail Bait* and *Effi Briest* in two such disparate styles. Unsympathetically, one can call him eclectic. For me, he shows prodigious range.

Theater in London

The new home of the National Theatre is now complete and stands among a dozen other white elephants on the South Bank of the Thames. This particular white elephant has three theaters inside: the Lyttelton Theatre which opened in March a year ago, the Olivier last October, and the Cottesloe this past March. If you approach the building via the ramp from Waterloo Station you are reminded of the ramps and corridors of Heathrow Airport. If you approach on street level, it's like the QE2 in dock. The Olivier is the largest and grandest of the three theaters. It seats over a thousand and has a revolving apron stage and more of the latest gadgetry of sound and lighting than the British government can afford.

Playing there since January has been Odom von Horvath's *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, a sad and bitter anti-Nazi play of the '30s, and the turntable stage whirls the scenes of the play around many ingenious times to the accompaniment of splendid stage effects, so that the audience breaks into applause and forgets about Hitler. The most notable moment is a nightclub scene, with cascades of light and sound, in the midst of which several ladies of the National Theatre Company dispose themselves nakedly for the delectation of the audience. Will the Olivier Theatre become a second Drury Lane? Will its directors be unable to resist turning every play into a spectacle, if only to keep the marvellous machinery from rusting? Two of the other three plays in repertory there—*Volpone* and *Julius Caesar*—suggest that the answer is no. In both plays the savageries of the authors and the excellences of the acting of Paul Scofield and John Gielgud give pride of place to stage tricks. The third play complicates the issue. *Blithe Spirit* is nothing if not a stage trick, and the resources of the Olivier seem to be entirely inadequate for it. The set is sumptuous, the acting is capable, and Maria Aitken is a most beautiful ghost; but can the Olivier Theatre make her


Michael Rosenblum

Robert G. L. Waite takes a rational look at Hitler's irrationality

Historian Robert Waite reveals the terrifying blend of brilliance and madness that shaped Hitler and his rule. Refuting a current biography, this book "definitely puts the lie to the view that Hitler may not have known about the crimes committed against the Jews."—*Publishers Weekly.* "Immensely revealing."—*James MacGregor Burns.*

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

Robert G. L. Waite

"Waite does not discount the traditional historical approach in favor of the psychohistorical, but sets out to combine the two and show that each required the other to complement it. The result is a book that is not only continually interesting in itself but may well point the way in which Hitler studies can most profitably develop in their next phase...[of recent biographies] the one most worth reading."—Alan Bullock, *New York Review of Books*

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disappear in a puff of smoke or swallow her up or levitate the objects she carries about? No, she has to waft herself off stage just as she would have to do in a cellar off Broadway; and all that is managed are a few self-opening doors, a few paintings falling off the walls, and a toppled table. The audience can see the rod that pokes up from under the stage to topple the table. Surely something is wrong with a theater in which the stage effects are lame when they are not excessive. Nevertheless all the productions are highly accomplished.

The Lyttelton is a straightforward proscenium arch theater, with the arch dissolved. It seats 200 fewer than the Olivier, has much more intimacy and atmosphere, and has superb acoustics. The Birmingham Repertory Theatre Company has just visited with notable productions of *Measure for Measure* and *The Devil is an Ass*, and is now taking them on tour in Europe. Similar visits in the future by other provincial companies will give Londoners and foreigners some showing of the great strength of provincial theater in England. Robert Bolt's new play, *State of Revolution* (about Lenin), is just opening at the Lyttelton, and Alan Ayckbourn's hilarious *Bedroom Farce* is there. They will be joined in the middle of June by *Divinas Palabras*, by Ramon del Valle Inclan.

The Cottesloe Theatre will be offering eight productions in repertory during the summer months. The Cottesloe is the people's theater, a black box half the size of the other two theaters, with seats half the price. The opening production in March was a nine-hour science fiction epic called *Illuminatus*, which gave the people what they wanted—fellatio, cunnilingus, and sodomy, not to mention masturbation. Of course these weren't the real thing (which can be had across the river or in your own home), but they were realistic enough to be very daring, and they came as part of a package of up-to-the-minute social and intellectual pretensions in the best science fiction manner. The thing was a sell-out, and was a great bore in spite of the titillation.

If you suppose that the Cottesloe is all bread and circuses, you may be right. In the last two weeks of May it offered a first play, *Four to One*, by Gawn Grainger, in which four working class lads (Irish, English, Welsh, Scots) played pool and talked about the roots of violence and then beat up an intruder on their game. Even for someone sitting within 10 feet of the circus it seemed that the four men really whacked the fifth, and presently blood and saliva ran out of his nose and mouth. That was a better trick than anything pulled off at the Olivier. Also visible at the Cottesloe is Stephen Poliakoff's *Strawberry Fields*, presumably named after the Beatle song. Poliakoff is one of England's rising young dramatists, and he tells a harsh and vivid tale of the fascist fringe of British society. A dispossessed rich young girl and a dispossessed poor young lad travel north together for clandestine meetings with supporters. The girl shoots and kills a mild-mannered policeman who comes upon them, and at the end she shoots and kills a nice liberal young man who is their prisoner. Before the killings the working class lad spouts his visions of holocaust—of the end of the world and of the present world of superhighways, aircraft noise, polluted mountainsides, fast food, mindless work, mindless pleasure.

Both plays tell literate England what literate England has been telling itself since the present national crisis began, and before: that economic decline, loss of national pride, and the depersonalization of society are the sources of fascism, and that the first recruits to fascism will be the reactionary right among the gentry, the dregs of the lower class, and some eccentrics of all classes. Both Poliakoff (who studied at Cambridge) and Grainger (who is an established actor) are crying *mea culpa*, and aiming their plays at polite middle class audiences so that those audiences can cry *mea culpa*, too. As the girl in Poliakoff's play says to the liberal young man when he tells her that her ideas are crazy: "You just don't understand." The liberal middle class designs the superhighways, the fast food, and the economic disasters that encourage the fascism that the liberal middle class deplores. What to do? Enjoy the crime, the self-punishment, the circus. England is the least likely nation in the world to go fascist, whatever economic depths it plunges to ahead of the rest of us, and the members of the audience at the Cottesloe laughed aloud at the working class lad's visions (powerfully expressed in a fine piece of acting by Stephen Rea), and they took the shootings with a straight face, and they doubtless went home to their decent lives.

One has to ignore the possibility of England's doom to ask the question that many people are asking about the National Theatre: can the three theaters survive inside the white elephant? The easy answer is yes. The same complaints are levelled against the Olivier and Lyttelton Theatres that have been levelled against Covent Garden for many years. Such establishments consume enormous quantities of money, with the consequent impoverishment of other artistic enterprises throughout the country, and they chiefly serve the comfortable and idle classes, native and foreign, who are the people who do not need subsidy. These are grave and true complaints, and the Olivier and Lyttelton Theatres are likely to survive them. The English are good at maintaining and celebrating unjust institutions. The well-off will enjoy their evening at three pounds a head at the Olivier Theatre, and they will enjoy an expensive dinner afterward at the agreeable theater restaurant, and they will walk outside on the terrace and look at the Thames and at the many ugly and few glorious buildings on the other side. None of the glorious ones are modern. As students of architecture say, the decoration for the whitish-gray cement of the Olivier and Lyttelton Theatres will have to be the people who go there. A lot of handsomely dressed people are going.

The Cottesloe is certainly in the most problematical position of the three theaters. Like the other two it is divorced from the workaday life of London, but unlike them it wants connection and perhaps cannot thrive without it. It is difficult to imagine the Cottesloe serving the creative life of English theater in a direct way. The sort of theater that the Cottesloe ought to be is the Roundhouse Theatre, which sits beside a dump at the Chalk Farm underground station. It is dirty, unfinished, fairly primitive, and congenial, and it crawls with young, lively, and often scruffy people. Something is always in motion there, on the main stage or downstairs; and though that something is often bad and trivial (*Illuminatus* transferred there from the Cottesloe), the place has the vigor to stir the creative imagination.

Of course it is easy to say what the Cottesloe ought to be and what theater in general ought to be. It is also easy to contradict oneself. The incontrovertible fact about theater in London is that within the space of a year the National Theatre has doubled the amount of drama being produced, and London is now twice over the theatrical capital of the world. Down the road at the Old Vic, the Prospect Theatre Company has just offered an extremely fine production of

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Shaw's *Saint Joan*, with Eileen Atkins in the title role and with a half dozen supporting actors who are every bit as good as she is. In the course of the next few weeks Prospect will also be putting on *Hamlet* and an up-to-date Homeric *War Games*. Further along the road the Young Vic is just about to launch several Stoppard plays. Across Waterloo Bridge at the Aldwych the Royal Shakespeare Company has brought down from Stratford its late 19th century version of *King Lear*, impressive if uneven. Also on display there is a new political play, *Destiny*, by David Edgars, which some critics rate as the best show in the West End. Alan Ayckbourn's newest play, *Just Between Ourselves*, is at the Queens, and just between ourselves it is bad; but Ayckbourn remains one of England's funniest and most observant playwrights, and Ayckbourn fans will want to see it. Tom Stoppard's *Dirty Linen* is still on show, and that too will draw devotees in spite of its flimsiness. Then there is Glenda Jackson in *Stevie*, which concerns the life and works of the poet Stevie Smith. *Otherwise Engaged* is still running, so is *Equus*, so is Maugham's *The Circle* (up from Chichester). If anyone fancies a taste of the '30s, there is *Banana Ridge*, by Ben Travers, who at age 90 is the Sophocles of English farce. If one wants the '50s, there is Terrence Rattigan's *Separate Tables*.

There is much else, including fringe. In Islington, St. Georges Elizabethan Theatre is doing four Shakespeare plays to a high standard. In Richmond at the Orange Tree one can find new plays and excellent acting in the tiniest of spaces. James Saunders's *Bodies* had its premiere there recently. The Bush Theatre in Shepherds Bush is offering an American season. There are a dozen lunchtime theaters. There are any number of pubs offering occasional theatrical fare. England may be doomed, and going fascist in the process, and the National Theatre may prove to be the white elephant it looks like. In the meantime London seems to be the center of some sort of civilization.

James Hepburn

James Hepburn is an American playwright living in London.

Books Considered

Comrade Chiang Ch'ing by Roxane Witke

(Little, Brown; $15)

"History writing is your area of expertise" said Chiang Ch'ing to Roxane Witke by way of farewell, "mine is revolutionary leadership." If we are to judge from Chiang Ch'ing's subsequent fate and from Witke's book, it seems that neither lady was overly proficient at her particular trade. This, however, should by no means detract from the interest presented by this exceptional document, so revealing of the fallen empress's character and psychology.

Through her writing, Witke appears as a rather nice person—modest, straightforward, sincere, not devoid of a certain sense of humor; she is moderately informed, but quite conscientious; naive at times, she is also somewhat blinded by her feminist bias; her goodwill and integrity are obvious and her political ideas pretty confused. She is bemused by her subject and finally remains unable to sort out her contradictory data and to formulate coherent conclusions. The combination of such characteristics is normally not conducive to sound historiography—and we shall try to further analyze how Witke failed in that respect—yet, the paradox is that the book's very naivete, shortcomings and inconsistencies make also for its unique value as a testimony.

Since the establishment of the People's Republic, no foreigner was ever granted such intimate and prolonged interviews with a member of the Chinese communist highest leadership. Had Witke been more conversant with Chinese realities, she might never have been deemed worthy of such a privilege. Facing a better informed, hence more skeptical (or cynical), interviewer Chiang Ch'ing would probably never have dared to abandon herself so freely to the dramatic resources of her imagination; in fact, the very innocence of her American visitor seems to have acted as a further stimulant to her compulsive talkativeness and mythomania, whereas a more questioning attitude from her listener might have frozen at once the flow of her inspiration. Finally, should Witke have been able to achieve a clearer grasp of her model, the book would have lost much of its convincing power: the evidence she provides is all the more damning for being offered often unwittingly, or against her own professed beliefs.

"I had come to appreciate her not only as a unique revolutionary leader, but also as a teacher" concludes Witke when taking leave of Chiang Ch'ing. The extraordinary thing is that she could still genuinely believe it, even after having been subjected for so many hours to Chiang Ch'ing's incoherent ramblings, ersatz-imperial antics and petty-bourgeois *kitsch*—all of which are displayed here before us in plentiful evidence. Witke remains convinced that Chiang Ch'ing was "a leader in her own right" whose "political talent was complemented by artistic and literary skill," that she was "unusually talented," that her activity was of "fundamental revolutionary nature" and that "she should be remembered as a person of extraordinary courage, as a woman-leader in a time of transition" and as "a leader in the revolutionary avant-garde." Drawing logically from such premises, she confidently assumes that Chiang Ch'ing enjoyed considerable popularity: "not only the young but also some aged were moved to sing her praises. The venerable writer Kuo Mo-jo eulogized her at the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of the Yenan forum." But this, in turn, leaves her bewildered by the tidal wave of popular hatred which surged against Chiang Ch'ing after the new leadership had found it politically convenient to allow the masses to express their feelings freely on this particular subject. At a loss to understand the spontaneous and massive rejection of her heroine by the Chinese people, she seeks to account for it by invoking "sexist" prejudice: to her mind, "The consciousness of the people was not yet revolutionized enough to be willing to accept a woman arriving as a woman at the summit of power. . . . She

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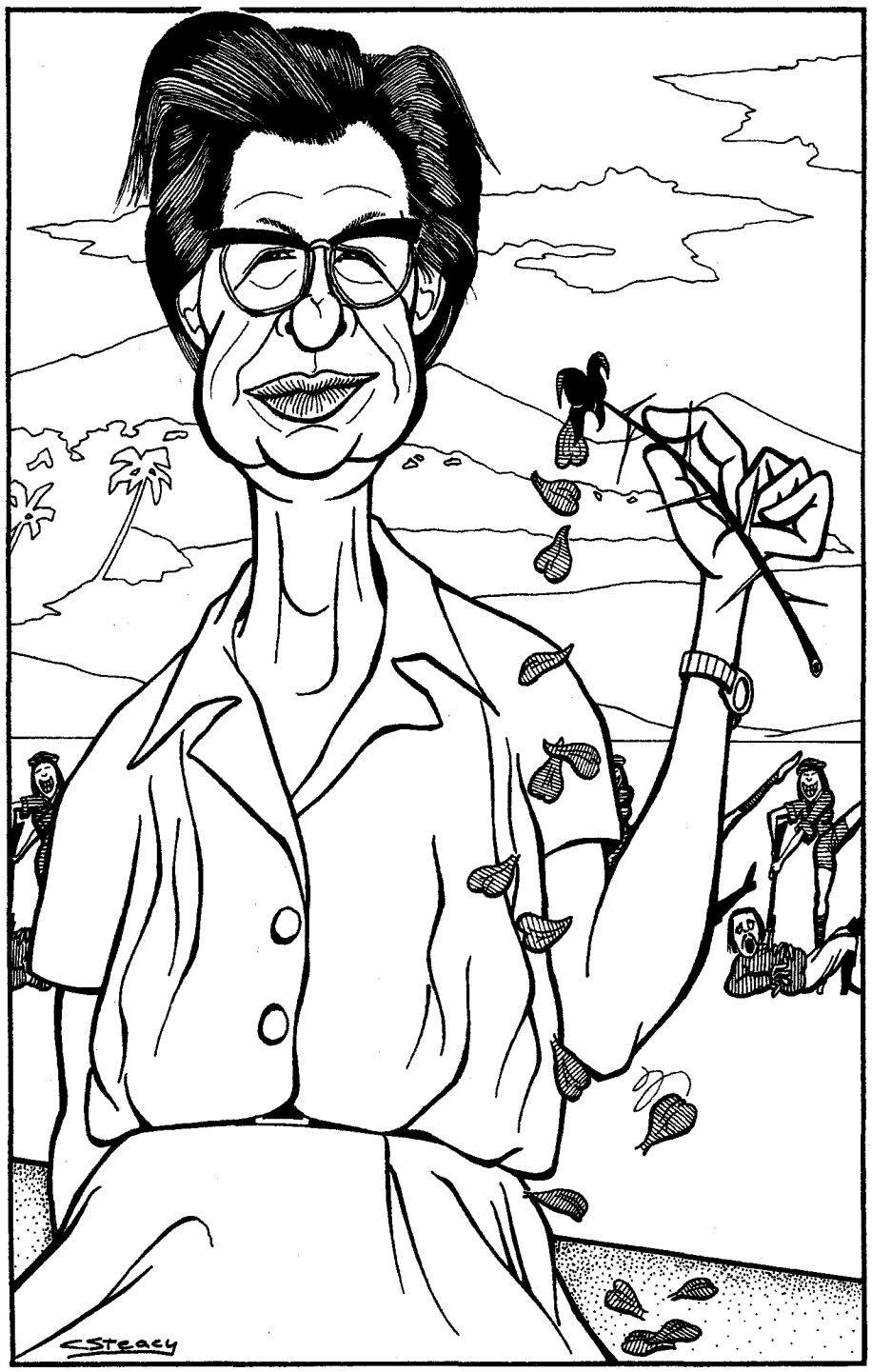
would not escape suffering for her defiance of the unequal but seemingly indestructible sexual norms." Consequently, for the author, the popular outbursts which not only accompanied but heralded Chiang Ch'ing's downfall (the T'ien-an men demonstration of April 5, 1976, exploding while Mao was still alive and Chiang Ch'ing still in power, was already a daring indictment of the "new empress") are to be ignored or denied their spontaneity: Witke describes these denunciations as couched in "a brutal jargon *passed down from above. . . .*" Actually, the popular feelings against Chiang Ch'ing and the official campaign for her vilification are two different issues which should not be confused.

Before examining these different questions—Chiang Ch'ing's alleged talents, revolutionary leadership, popularity and sexist victimization—I wish first to make one point clear concerning the current campaign officially directed against Chiang Ch'ing.

Without Mao there could have been no Madame Mao.

This elementary truism is now being systematically obliterated by Chairman Hua's Propaganda Department. In order to legitimize his earlier coup d'etat, Hua must create, against all evidence, a myth according to which his purging of Madame Mao and of the Maoist Radicals was entirely in harmony with Mao's own original intentions. Flimsy and spurious clues are now being fabricated, alleging Mao's earlier displeasure with his wife and with the small group of people who were in fact his only faithful followers among the top leadership. The truth, of course, is that Chiang Ch'ing and her friends owed everything to Mao: they had obtained their exalted position entirely thanks to his personal initiative, and retained it only through his continuous and active protection. They had no support from the Party, no support from the army, and—needless to say—no support from among the masses (a point of much less importance however, since in a totalitarian state the masses have no say in the selection of their rulers). The backing of Mao's prestige alone could maintain them in power, against the tremendous hostility and hatred which their own political ineptitude had earned them from all quarters. They would have been toppled much earlier, had it not been for this peculiar immunity afforded them by the "Great Helmsman's" private favor. The swiftness and ease with which they were disposed of as soon as Mao breathed his last, were but a final demonstration of this.



Drawing by Chuck Steacy

To ensure a smooth transition, Mao's successor is now confronted with a delicate task: it is necessary for Hua to claim that, by destroying Maoism for all practical purposes, he is actually faithful to Mao! This improbable message is now being dutifully broadcast everywhere. In Europe, in America, even in Australia, we can already hear the usual Peking sycophants zealously denouncing Madame Mao and exposing all the evils of the "Gang of Four." May I confess that I find their performance singularly tasteless? I myself can hardly be suspected of being an admirer of Chiang Ch'ing—I did not wait until her downfall to begin criticizing her—but when I see how she is attacked now by people who professed nothing but respect for her as long as she was in power, I somehow wish to take her defense!

In Canton at the end of 1974 a courageous young revolutionary wrote under the pen name of Li Yi-che a political manifesto of historical momentum. On the occasion of the anti-Lin Piao campaign, then in full swing, he dared to ask the only relevant question: what is the point of attacking a dead individual, if we do not attempt to identify the mechanism by which he came into

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power—what is the point of denouncing Lin Piao, if we do not endeavour to denounce the Lin Piao *system?* Since that manifesto was actually aimed in part at the "Gang of Four," the persecution to which Li Yi-che was being subjected since its publication relented somewhat for a while following Chiang Ch'ing's downfall. But now the news has just reached us from Canton that he has been arrested once again. Hua Kuo-feng obviously cannot afford to let such a man go free: one of these days, *he might well have come to ask where the "Gang of Four" had drawn its power from.*

To ascribe to Madame Mao the main responsibility for the senseless violence and cruelty of the "Cultural Revolution," for the destruction of Chinese culture, and for the ruthless cretinization of the most sophisticated nation on earth—which have all taken place during the last year—would be akin to crediting the ass whose jaw Samson borrowed in battle with the ability of destroying the Philistines. The devastating effects of this unusual weapon derived from the hand which swung it: the very enormity of Madame Mao's havoc should not induce us to forget her own *essential mediocrity* (her own confessions to Witke further confirm this mediocrity—a revelation all the more convincing since it runs against that author's views). By herself, she was nothing but a failed actress and a barely literate *demi-mondaine;* of her own, she had nothing—neither intelligence nor talent, nor even elementary shrewdness and basic political acumen, as recent events have made all too plain. The large-scale sufferings, crimes and ruins which we now associate with her name, derived not so much from any evil genius of hers—petty vindictiveness and ludicrous bad taste were about the worst she was capable of—but from the latitude and impetus deliberately given her by Mao. It would be sheer impudence to denounce the "Gang of Four" while covering up the decisive and demiurgic role played by Mao in this matter. Yet, among Western audiences, there is generally enough ignorance to allow this conjuror's trick to be pulled off without challenge—especially when the performing artists happen to be, as is too often the case, respected political, diplomatic or academic authorities.

(With Chinese audiences however, it does not go down so easily. Popular reaction against such cynical tampering with historical evidence became so strong that recently the Party committee of Kwangtung province and of the Canton garrison felt moved to send a message to Hua Kuo-feng, demanding that a new critical evaluation of Mao's role be at last authorized. But this is another story.)

Chiang Ch'ing's talents and artistic taste were not lost with the few forgettable movies she made during the '30s, they found a fuller (and all too well documented) outlet in her pet-project, the reform of the Chinese opera. It was at first successfully resisted by the party leadership, but once the "Cultural Revolution" had swept these leaders away, and thanks to the personal backing of Mao, Chiang Ch'ing finally managed to monopolize the entire Chinese stage for 10 years with her half-dozen measly "modern revolutionary operas." Witke provides further information on the making of these unspeakable hybrids, bringing confirmation, if any was still needed, that, in their mixture of sinicized Punch-and-Judy show with maudlin bourgeois musicals, they had been personally and closely supervised by Madame Mao to their last detail. But Witke also gives us more indication of Chiang Ch'ing's other intellectual and artistic ventures: thus for instance, she dutifully records her lengthy, pedantic and clumsy plodding through the 18th century classical novel *Red Chamber Dream,* in a conceited and incompetent attempt at literary criticism. On the chapter of esthetic theory, where Chiang Ch'ing exerted absolute rule over 800,000,000 civilized people for a decade, her views seem to combine an inordinate taste for movies such as *The Sound of Music,* together with incoherent denunciations of Western culture: thus in a speech which she herself called her "major philosophical statement," she exposed how the West which, in the past, had produced "only a pitiful number of classics," had sunk now into "decadence and obscenity," "poisoning and corrupting the minds of the people" by means of "rock-and-roll, jazz, strip-tease, impressionism, symbolism, abstractionism, Fauvism and modernism . . ."

This xenophobic obscurantism ("cultural exchange with foreign countries must be restricted") was not even compensated by any partiality towards Chinese culture; she looked at it with even more suspicion: "handling cultural treasures is always fraught with perils.

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Some Chinese archaeologists and their students who were allowed to work at liberty with these ancient objects, grew to identify with them too closely, and consequently their revolutionary ardor slackened." While Western culture remained safely out of her reach for all practical purposes, Chinese traditional heritage was unfortunately an all too convenient target, close at hand, for her to smash: "not all archaeologic sites and relics should be preserved, since the remains of earlier historical eras are so easily exploited by ambitious men." On her own instructions, she explained to Witke, various monuments of Peking were pulled down, against even her own followers' protest. But enough on Chiang Ch'ing's cultural achievements; let us come to her revolutionary career.

Admittedly, Chiang Ch'ing's childhood and youth were ghastly. Yet, is the experience of suffering sufficient to turn one into a revolutionary? What victims learn is not so much how to rebel, as how to become tormentors themselves: witness the traditional legions of oppressed daughters-in-law turning into oppressive mothers-in-law. Chiang Ch'ing dealt with her old personal enemies with utter ferocity; we may perhaps find extenuating circumstances for her behavior in the bitter experiences of her youth—it remains nevertheless that most of her political initiatives never went much beyond gratification of mere spite. All her life, she was to seek recognition as a revolutionary with increasing frustration. In Shanghai during the '30s, she never succeeded in convincing the party cadres of the seriousness of her political commitment. She reached Yenan by a longer and more complicated itinerary than she would admit today. If, when talking to Witke, she insists that she arrived there directly from Shanghai as early as August 1937, it is to hide the fact that she went first to Chungking—the Kuomintang war capital—where she remained in 1938-39, to act in movies. The episode in itself had no particularly shameful implications, but she probably feared that its disclosure would again cast doubt on her revolutionary credentials which, not without reasons, were questioned all through her career. When she arrived in Yenan, her party affiliation was suspected. What saved her in the end was not so much her flimsy political record as her good looks: in these bleak and barren surroundings, where there were only few women, most of them cruelly marked by the ordeal of the Long March, a pretty actress—even if third rate—fresh from Shanghai, could not fail to attract universal attention. In no time at all, Mao picked her up, thus making it unnecessary for her to achieve further revolutionary credibility. However, the very facility of such a dispensation made her desire all the more to be believed and accepted in her own right. To prove herself as a "revolutionary leader" became her burning obsession. For internal consumption, the propaganda organs, which fell under her control following the "Cultural Revolution," dutifully produced her new image—according to her own specifications; but she still felt that "foreigners had not appreciated how deeply committed to communism she had been." In order to remedy this, she commissioned Witke to paint the portraits she wanted. Although her own feminist credo predisposed Witke to accept part of the figment without challenge, she was not entirely taken in by her client; the American scholar realized that there was a disturbing gap between the personage and the person: "I recognized how much more plausible and engaging she appeared when she was not looking toward posterity . . . . I realized how in her own mind truth and fiction, history and literature, past and present had blurred. Such synthesis was at the heart of the propaganda by which she lived." Numerous and revealing instances of Chiang Ch'ing's mythomania—or, to borrow Witke's kinder phrasing, her aptitude for "synthetizing truth with fiction"—are recorded in this book (not always uncritically, as, for example, when Chiang Ch'ing evokes her own intrepidity in front of a tiger in the Hupeh countryside, Witke pertinently observes in a footnote: "Hupeh is not famous for tigers") together with other evidence of hysterical behavior.

In the course of her interviews, Witke could witness at first hand the sheltered and luxurious life enjoyed by the new Chinese ruling class. When reading her descriptions of the exquisite surroundings and elitist pleasures in which Chiang Ch'ing was indulging herself (and we must remember that in the Chinese leadership, the Chiang Ch'ing faction was representing the more austere variety of Maoism!), far removed from the harsh realities of the ordinary people's life and shrouded in holy mystery, one is reminded of the popular Russian joke about Brezhnev's mother visiting her son's winter palaces and summer villas: "All that is fine, but what if the Reds come back?" Witke also notes that Chiang Ch'ing and her cronies enjoy privately all kinds of films and books whose access they deny to the masses: "Works regarded as unhealthy for the people are restricted to private showings among the leading comrades who consider them for reference . . . . It is all right to screen these films among ourselves. But those private showings cannot be publicized." Talk of the Maoist "mass-line!" Surprisingly enough, such evidence of the ruling elite's cynical contempt for the people does not seem to fundamentally shake Witke's basic assumption, that the People's Republic is "socialist" in nature. Furthermore she herself acknowledges that Chiang Ch'ing's disclosures about the brotherly life at the top—with old comrades busy plotting to assassinate each other by dagger, bomb, gun and poison—revealed "a cutthroat behavior among the leaders"; and yet, she persists in her belief that this underworld is "revolutionary" and that Chiang Ch'ing was one of its leading luminaries.

But enough of Chiang Ch'ing's "revolutionary leadership"; let us come now to the chapter of her popularity. Chinese political life is generally so well insulated from the outsiders' curiosity, that gigantic upheavals can occur without any signal of their imminent outburst being picked up by foreign observers. For instance, no one ever realized that an intense conflict had been opposing Mao and Liu Shao-ch'i before the explosion of the "Cultural Revolution," and later on, Lin Piao's disgrace took *nearly* everyone by surprise. And yet, in this perfectly watertight system, the *universal unpopularity* of Chiang Ch'ing was so widespread and fierce, it exuded so irrepressibly from the entire body social and politic, that it required no particular flair to become aware of it (actually quite a number of analysts were able to forecast Chiang Ch'ing's disgrace many months in advance). Witke's surprise does not, therefore, indicate great familiarity with the Chinese scene on her part. Chiang Ch'ing, who suffered from persecution-mania, seems at the same time to have developed various megalomaniac self-delusions as a kind of psychological compensation; she entertained fanciful visions of a populace devoted to her: "She would not reveal the exact date of her birthday because, she said, she did not want the masses to celebrate her birthday . . . . If the masses in Canton and its environs learned of her continuing presence, of her closeness to them, [Chiang Ch'ing said], they would

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become terribly excited." Yet Witke is hard put to find any visible evidence of this popular excitement; actually the only thing she can quote is Kuo Mo-jo's famous poem. There is some unwitting irony in this choice. Kuo Mo-jo is the most notorious intellectual prostitute of China, and swift as he had been to jump on Chiang Ch'ing's boat when it had the wind in its sails, the ancient rat left it even quicker when it began to sink: in November '76, he wrote a second poem on Chiang Ch'ing, which Witke forgets to quote:

. . . The white skeleton ghost
Who likened herself to Empress Wu
Is gone in one sweep of the broom . . . .
What unbridled ambition
Malicious conspiracy
and abominable schemes! . . .
She deserves a thousand deaths . . .
and so on.

Unable to face the fact of Chiang Ch'ing's unpopularity, Witke has to find an explanation for the gusto with which the masses seized the official opportunity to vent their hatred of her. Her own feminist obsession provides her with a convenient but totally unconvincing interpretation: she was being punished for "having arrived as a woman at the summit of power." Actually it is all too obvious that Chiang Ch'ing was attacked not for being *a* woman, but for being *that* woman. Her disgrace, like Indira Gandhi's electoral defeat, may have been accompanied by some "sexist" abuse, but in both cases, the downfall was brought about by a political ineptitude of such enormity, that one hardly feels the need to look elsewhere for a better explanation. Moreover, it must be observed that the Chinese, when denouncing Chiang Ch'ing, were always careful to simultaneously extol the merits of other female leaders, so as to clearly mark by this deliberate counterpoint that it was not her sex which was at issue: the glorious memory of Yang K'ai-hui, one of Mao's earlier wives who had died a martyr for the Revolution, was thus solemnly restored, and Teng Ying-ch'ao, the widow of Chou En-Lai and an authentic leader in her own right, was again invited to play a prominent role on the public scene.

The misspelling of a certain number of Chinese names is probably to be blamed in part on the typographers—let us not dwell on that. There are various inaccuracies or fanciful mix-ups (*T'ai-chi ch-üan* is defined as "sinuous exercises based on mimes of animal and flowers," *pan-hu* as a "wind instrument," The Azure Cloud Temple on the outskirts of Peking is confused with the Sun Yat-Sen Park in the heart of the city, Chiang Ch'ing's own poem in naively attributed to Mao etc., etc.) All this is venial, and yet it tends to make the book read more like popular journalism than scholarly writing. More disturbing is to find the famous episode of January 28, 1932—the Nineteenth Route Army defense of Shanghai against the Japanese—referred to by a historian, as "the *rebellious* Nineteenth Army's defense of Shanghai *on July 18.*" Not only is the date wrong, but the use of the adjective "rebellious" is an anachronism since the Nineteenth Route army rebelled two years later, at the end of 1933, in Fukien. An unforgivable error, twice repeated, places Hu Feng in Yenan in 1942, as a spokesman for the Shanghai writers opposing Mao. Hu Feng did indeed criticize Mao's policies, but from afar: as everyone knows, *Hu Feng never set foot in Yenan.* Yao Wen-yuan's book on Lu Hsun in described as "having developed new and vital themes": actually it consisted essentially in a hackneyed rehash of *Chou Yang's ideas*—so much so, that, when Yao came into power after Chou Yang's disgrace, he diligently ensured that the book was withdrawn from circulation! Both Yao Wen-yuan and Chiang Ch'un-ch'iao could hardly have harbored cordial feelings for Lu Hsun, since the fearsome polemist had attacked Yao's father and had been embroiled in a bitter controversy with Chiang. It is interesting to learn from Chiang Ch'ing's mouth that Lu Hsun's widow died as the result of the persecution which she suffered during the "Cultural Revolution," but Witke should not have left unchallenged Chiang Ch'ing's preposterous denunciation of the culprits as Lin Piao's followers; it is far more likely that the tormentors of Lu Hsun's widow belonged to Chiang Ch'ing's own clique: in this event, the sympathy expressed by Chiang Ch'ing, so gullibly recorded by Witke, puts one in mind of the "tears shed by the cat on the mouse's fate." Had Witke not been in such a rush to get her book into print, she might have found some useful documentation on this topic in the material on the "Gang of Four" published in China since November '76.

Regarding the "Cultural Revolution," Mao had been reduced to pathetic inpotence: he launched the "Cultural Revolution" for the very purpose of regaining the ground he had lost in the

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power-struggle. Some factual details: Liu Shao-ch'i wrote the "Later Ten Points" allegedly to complement the Chairman's "Ten Points," but in fact to defuse its disruptive potential. The secret of Yang Ch'eng-wu's puzzling downfall was indeed that, being Lin Piao's protege, he was eliminated at Chiang Ch'ing's initiative. The "Cultural Revolution" resulted in grevious losses of life and property; the damage it brought to agriculture, and most of all to industry, was so heavy that, five years later, recovery was still incomplete, etc. etc. All this we knew already and had actually said years ago! Let us hope that Chiang Ch'ing's authentication gives these notions a wider acceptance. I noted with interest that Chiang Ch'ing claimed—rightly, I suppose—original authorship of the momentous "May 16 Circular." Quite significantly too, she considered that Ch'en Po-ta had been unfairly punished.

Regrettable as it is that Witke does not seem able to put Chiang Ch'ing's informations to fuller use, at least on one particular point, her ignorance and gullibility reach impardonable proportions—and this is on the question of Chou En-lai. The fierce feud opposing Chiang to Chou began during the "Cultural Revolution" and culminated during the last years of Chou's life (which relentless harassment by Chiang Ch'ing and her group actually shortened)—in fact even Chou's death could not assuage Chiang Ch'ing's hatred. All this was well enough documented even before the downfall of the "Gang of Four," and yet Witke does not seem to have ever heard a word of it! Not only does she record uncritically Chiang Ch'ing's false expressions of sympathy for Chou En-lai, but she goes so far as to name Chou "Chiang Ch'ing's subtle champion!!!" In fact, a point worth pondering is that Witke contacted Chiang Ch'ing through *Chou En-lai's wife*, and that the Chiang-Witke's interviews took place *under Chou's sanction*. It is, I believe, not too far-fetched, and perfectly consistent with what we know of Chou's style and methods, to see in the old fox's good offices the ultimate trap into which Chiang Ch'ing was to be lured by her own conceit and megalomania (note that the text of the ludicrous speech by Chiang Ch'ing on "Fauvism, impressionism and strip-tease" was also delivered to Witke *through the services of Chou En-lai:* Chou, with his sophisticated experience of the outside world, knew very well what devastating effect such a publication could have on Chiang Ch'ing's image in the minds of a Western audience. And it is indeed the way it worked: *the very first attacks against Chiang Ch'ing heralding her eventual disgrace, took precisely the Witke interviews as their initial pretext!*

In the end, what disqualifies Witke as a historian is perhaps not so much the uncertain quality of her information (a point which could still be open to debate) as her basic *attitude*. She remains essentially inhibited by feelings of gratitude, admiration and personal loyalty toward Chiang Ch'ing: such are the qualities of a reliable friend—not of a reliable historian whose first duty, as said Michelet, should be "to forsake respect." Witke writes for instance: "Some shocking remarks about Lin Piao's travesties and their deleterious effects upon her psychic and physical health had been struck from the official record, though not from my memory. *Upon her request such details do not appear in this book* . . . . A lightly edited report by me of interviews that have the character of narrated memoirs would have *served* no one in the long run, *least of all Chiang Ch'ing* . . . . A torrent of talk to be kept off the record . . . . Throughout I have tried to respect the discriminations between private and public messages. What follows here is *what she authorized me to say* . . . " (my italics). Self-censorship, dutiful deference to Chiang Ch'ing's wishes, considerations on how to serve Chiang Ch'ing best. Did Witke ever consider how to serve historical *truth* best? (That she has no vocation for history, nor awareness of what a historian's duty may entail, is illustrated at the end, by her incredible reaction when Chiang Ch'ing offers her to stay longer, presenting her with this golden opportunity to prolong such unique and privileged experience for some months, she first refuses on account of various professional and family commitments, and then reluctantly agrees to remain—FOR TWO MORE DAYS!

Yet, as I said at the beginning, inasmuch as Witke fails as a historian, she succeeds as witness. She may not have grasped the truth of Chiang Ch'ing—a task which perhaps no one could have managed—but she has somehow succeeded to transmit her voice, something she alone was in a position to do.

We need not pay too much attention to what Witke has to say herself; it is enough that Chiang Ch'ing should be heard to speak through her. This alone makes her book an invaluable document, whatever its flaws.

A few years ago, the confidences of a former Red Guard leader, Ken Ling (carefully collected and edited by a team of scholars as *The Revenge of Heaven*; Putnam) provided us with a vivid account of the Maoist world, perceived from the grass-root level. Roxane Witke now offers us another view of that same world, this time seen from the top. Between the former Red Guard and the fallen empress, there was initially the gigantic gap which in so-called "socialist" countries separates an ordinary subject from a member of the ruling elite, and yet their respective destinies appear tragically similar: equally intoxicated with the delusion that they were playing a leading role, they were mere puppets in a bloody drama whose ultimate meaning and purpose utterly escaped them. What seems to strangely link their fate in the end is that both attempted to live by, and literally enact, the very principle which was eventually to crush them—that crude Lin Piao saying which so aptly summarized the entire Maoist philosophy: "political power is the power to oppress others."

Simon Leys

Simon Leys's forthcoming book, *Chinese Shadows*, will be published in July by Viking.

Taking Rights Seriously
by Ronald Dworkin

(Harvard University Press; $12)

"The language of rights," writes Ronald Dworkin, "now dominates political debate in the United States." Given the character of our constitutional system, one might argue that that domination is very old. What is more striking is the way in which the language of rights has come to dominate philosophical debate.

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Some 200 years ago, Jeremy Bentham denounced the doctrine of natural rights as "nonsense on stilts," and that denunciation has been commonly, if less wittily, repeated over the years. But now it is fair to say that our best philosophers are students of rights—and opponents of the utilitarian creed that Bentham first enunciated. They believe, most simply, that the status or character of individuals establishes certain barriers to what governments can do, even for the "greatest good of the greatest number." Dworkin, who is a philosopher as well as a lawyer (he is currently University Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford), shares this view. Rights, he says, "are political trumps held by individuals."

In a series of beautifully written, mutually supportive essays, Dworkin applies the theory of rights, or his own version of the theory, to the case of judicial decision-making. He aims to do two things: to provide an account of what judges (most often) do in political regimes where individual rights are recognized; and then to suggest what they ought to do. These aims require him to undertake a full-scale critique of legal positivism, the jurisprudential relative of political utilitarianism, and that critique forms the core of his book.

The doctrine of legal positivism holds that individuals possess only those rights that have been made the subject of legislation or that have been established by custom and tacitly ratified by the legislators. The task of judges is to uphold these rights, and only these, applying established rules to particular cases. They are the servants of the law, not its masters. But this view of the judicial role runs into difficulties whenever the rules are ambiguous or in conflict with one another, or whenever plaintiffs raise issues new to the law or issues that fall between existing rules. Now no particular decision is called for by the law, and judges must exercise "judicial discretion," acting in the spirit of the law as they understand it, or, according to the "realist" revision of legal positivism, following their own political or moral predilections. When explicit or non-controverted legal provisions run out, it is commonly thought, judges are on their own—for there is no "law" beyond the law. They can't be said in such cases to uphold the rights of the plaintiff, even if they find for him. Rather, they create new rights, acting as a substitute legislature. In the recent abortion cases, on this view, the justice of the Supreme Court began by recognizing that the Constitution was silent or ambiguous on the fundamental issue. And so when they overruled state laws banning abortion during the first trimester, they were not enforcing but rather establishing a constitutional right, hitherto unknown, in accordance with their own sense of what the Constitution ought to require.

Now, since courts are political bodies, power centers as well as checks on the exercise of power, their members have often, not implausibly, been charged with seizing upon the possibilities of discretion. In many cases, it is not only the meaning of ambiguous or conflicting rules that is at issue, but also the claim that the rules are in fact ambiguous or conflicting. To find ambiguity or conflict is to find room, or to make room, for judical law-making. This, it is said, the courts have increasingly done. Such a program, however, is open to fundamental democratic objections—which take the form of a demand for "judicial restraint." We don't want judges making our laws; that is what we have elected senators and congressmen, city councilers and school committeemen, to do. Judges must defer to our elected representatives, allowing the "people" to decide, assuming wherever possible the clarity and coherence of their decisions, enforcing the most recently enacted legislation.

The originality of Dworkin's position is that he is simultaneously an opponent of judicial restraint and of judicial discretion. He argues that individual rights, in a state like ours, escape legislative definition; hence judges cannot restrict themselves to the enforcement of statutes. And at the same time, he argues that rights are in fact definable in terms of the history and morality, broadly understood, of our political institutions; hence judges are never on their own. Taking rights seriously means attending to the text of the Constitution, to the interpretations and shared understandings of that text developed over the years, to subsequent legislation and court decisions, to institutional history, and to the principles of our common morality. Out of this mass of information, the judge must construct a political theory—not a theory which reflects his own convictions as to what rights are and who possesses them, but a theory which reflects our convictions, which describes the status of individuals in our society. And then, confronted with a hard case, the judge discovers rather than invents

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the rights that he enforces: his decision is really a "finding." Whether he likes what he finds or not, he is bound by it.

Dworkin's fundamental claim is that rights exist, deeply embedded in the collective life of our constitutional regime. Particular assertions of right are right or wrong, and that is what the courts are called upon to decide. The fact that these decisions are controversial is no argument against making them. Indeed, there is no way to avoid making them. When judges pretend to exercise restraint, they are actually saying that rights are not at stake (the plaintiff is not entitled to an outcome different from that chosen by the legislature), or they are refusing to take seriously the rights that are at stake. In either case they are deciding, not refusing to decide; in the second case they are deciding badly, failing to do justice to the man or woman before them.

On the positivist view, there is no justice to be done in a hard case. Any of several decisions fit or can be fitted to the existing law, and no one is entitled to a particular verdict. The judges must do what seems to them best. But this view, Dworkin points out, ignores what is going on in the courtroom. Lawyers don't disagree about what is best; they disagree about what is right. A plaintiff in a courtroom doesn't usually argue that the national interest would be served by a decision in his favor. That's the sort of argument he makes to his congressmen. To the judge he insists that his rights have been violated. And the judge must say yes or no. In the abortion case, the Supreme Court said yes: the state laws at issue violated the rights of the women involved. These rights are, to be sure, nowhere listed in a legal text. Nevertheless, Dworkin imagines a judge being forced to take this view of our constitutional morality, despite his own (personal) opposition to abortion.

All this adds up to a powerful defense of a powerful judicial role in our political life. The critique of legal positivism and judicial discretion undercuts the usual objections of democrats—so long as democrats agree that individuals have rights. A particular judge's view of constitutional morality may, of course, conflict with that of some legislative majority. But legislative majorities cannot violate individual rights. Nor, if rights are controversial, can majorities be allowed to say what they are, for then they would be deciding in their own case, where their own interests (or those of their constituents) are deeply involved. The best procedure, which is also the established procedure, is to allow courts to decide.

Several of Dworkin's essays attempt to describe concretely what such decision-making involves. He discusses questions of civil disobedience, reverse discrimination, sexual morality, and each of these pieces is a model of legal and philosophical reasoning. But he is most interested in the procedure itself and its rationale, and it is with reference to these general issues that I want to express some hesitations about his argument and to raise in a somewhat different form the democratic objection. Dworkin writes as if only individual rights and majority interests are being argued over here. But the argument also, and centrally, concerns the relative authority of courts and legislatures. And while that latter question might be settled in theory by marking out the relevant rights and limiting courts to their enforcement, it's not clear that it should be settled in practice by judges, who are themselves a party to the controversy. For judges are also political men and women, who presumably prefer more authority to less. The most seriously they take rights or, rather, the more rights they take seriously, the more authority they have. Hence their own personal and corporate interests are deeply involved, even when they have no direct interest in the outcome of this or that litigation. And if judges are judges of last resort on the question of their own authority, what power exists to check the development among them of a political theory that warrants an extensive and detailed judicial government?

In fact, such a theory has already been developed, and judges acting in its name (and not in the name of judicial discretion) now find themselves enforcing individual rights by running local school systems and administering state prisons. And when they engage in such activities, they don't merely spend money already allocated for schools and prisons; they require expenditures beyond existing allocations. They impinge, then, on what has always been thought to be the most important legislative function. I doubt that one could repeat today the argument made in *The Federalist*: that courts "have neither Force nor Will, but merely judgment," and that they are "beyond comparison the weakest of the three departments of power." If there are still practical limitations on what judges can do, Dworkin does not refer to them; nor does his argument legitimate any particular set of limits. He provides what is probably the best possible defence of judicial government.

It is surprising, then, that he has nothing at all to say about how judges ought to be chosen to exercise the enhanced powers he has described. Today, Supreme Court judges are nominated by the president, confirmed by the Senate, appointed for life. This procedure would seem to give popular majorities, though only if they are sustained over time, effective control of judicial decision-making. But presidents know amazingly little about the political theories of the judges they choose (witness Eisenhower and Warren), and a kind of constitutional decorum prevents

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senators from questioning them too closely about their legal opinions. We are committed to their independence. But if Dworkin's argument were accepted, we might well modify that commitment and decide that we needed to know in advance and in detail just what rights they intended to take seriously. And we might want to appoint them to limited terms, so that we could check on their commitment to the political theory they profess. . . .

So Dworkin's argument has important implications for the existing constitutional balance and also for democratic theory in general. He has provided an elaborate and persuasive jurisprudence of rights, to go along with the philosophy of rights. But his jurisprudence has this special feature: that the rights that belong to all of us are ultimately entrusted to some of us, judicial Guardians, an elite of judges. To whom else can they be entrusted? I am not sure. But Dworkin's argument must be at least as worrying for democrats as the (now discredited) doctrine of judicial discretion.

Michael Walzer

We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America by Barbara Mayer Wertheimer

(Pantheon; $15.95)

Working It Out by Sara Ruddick and Pamela Daniels

(Pantheon; $10)

Work is our national anthem, or our national dirge—we sing it either way, sometimes both at once. Listen to a turn-of-the-century novelist: "Work, work whether you want to or not." And a Victorian professor of history: "It is better to wear out than to rust out." "Whistle while you work," sang the dwarfs. "If you inherited enough money to live comfortably," two sociologists asked a national sample of employed men, "would you continue to hold a job?" 80 percent said yes.

The sociologists asked men only, just as the novelist, professor and dwarfs were male. Work, it would seem, is a strictly masculine activity. But of course that has never been true in American history, least of all in our lifetimes. Today two out of five gainfully employed persons are women. Work has been scored for mixed voices.

And Barbara Mayer Wertheimer will not let us forget it. *We Were There*, she titles her history of American wage-earning women from the Indians to the garment workers. It is a long, detailed narrative, bringing the past to vivid life, particularly through profiles of outstanding labor leaders and descriptions of job conditions. In tone it is unmistakably a dirge, a litany of hardships almost unimaginable to have endured and sometimes unbearable to read.

Women working in cotton fields, coal mines, windowless factories, factories with windows locked and doors chained, working 10, 11, 14 hours a day. Women in soap factories, their fingers eaten by the caustic soda so that they bleed on the way home. Women in match factories, their jaws gradually devoured by phosphorus. Department-store clerks standing 12 hours, given only five minutes to use a toilet three floors away . . . the only toilet for all 282 saleswomen as well as customers. A mill mother on night shift, her three-day-old baby sleeping in a box beside the loom.

The misery does not relent. Chapter after chapter, we encounter different women and a constant sorrow. And no matter how hard they worked, they were paid less than men doing the same work. The only respite comes with efforts at unionization, led by tireless organizers like Leonora O'Reilly, Mother Jones, and Maud Swartz. Indeed, Wertheimer has cast unionizers as the heroines. She devotes the last quarter of the book to the brief period of 1900-1914, when women's unionizing and strikes reached a crescendo . . . and largely failed. In the 1920s only one of nine male workers belonged to a union, but only one of 34 females.

Wertheimer does not preach despair, however. The Wagner Act and the CIO rejuvenated unions in the 1930s, the feminist movement awakened women in the 1970s, and therefore sexual equality will come, slowly but inevitably. In the meantime, she writes, "we will continue to draw strength from those women who went before."

This book is "herstory." First and last it is saying: "move over, men. Women

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have made history, too." Like affirmative-action programs, it compensates for past injustice. Where the Sons of Liberty fought for liberty, now the Daughters of Liberty fight. Where Eugene Debs went to prison, now goes Pauline Newman. Instead of grand statesmen and industrialists, we see stooped, sweating workers, women among them. Wertheimer has performed an important service by equalizing the scales of man-heavy, elite-heavy histories.

But equalization also forms the flaw of her achievement. Basically she tells women's story in male terms—jobs, strikes, politics. These terms, however, miss the distinctive meaning of female experience prior to the 1940s. Women wage-earners differed from men not only because they were treated worse, but because typically they gave up their jobs when they married. Work did not span their adult lives, as it has for men. It formed a phase in their life cycle, coming after girlhood and before motherhood. To be sure, poverty or desertion or widowhood drive many wives back into the labor force. But usually they returned home as soon as remarriage or finances permitted.

Wertheimer mentions this fact but does not really incorporate it into her perspective. She tells of Leonora Barry, for example: mother of two young children, widowed, forced to work in a hosiery mill, joining the Knights of Labor, hired to organize and lecture crosscountry on behalf of women's unions. But after three years she resigned her position. Why? Because she remarried and, we learn in a quiet footnote, she "believed that women should work only when necessary." The footnote is wagging the text here. Attitudes like Barry's explain much of why organization of blue-collar females failed. Male unionists discouraged and discriminated, but all too often the women themselves were uninterested because they regarded their jobs as a detour toward home.

The principle of equalization also cuts a second flaw across Wertheimer's book. She defines "work" itself in male terms—it is what one does for pay. But what about housework? And parenting? And activities that hover somewhere between work and play: love-making, art-making, introspecting? Man (and woman) does not live for breadwinning alone. Even in the desperately cramped lives of female wage-earners, there has been space for unpaid occupations. More privileged women can, of course, make still more space or even afford a room of their own.

Women's work has been as wide as their lives. That is the whole truth and that is what we learn from an eloquent set of autobiographical essays titled *Working It Out*. The 23 women who composed this book are writers, artists, professors, and scientists, generally in their late 30s or early 40s, some of them famous (Adrienne Rich and Tillie Olsen), most of them not. This book is not about fame, however, or even about occupations. It is about the ways by which these women arrived at their occupations. Some took the direct route: college, professional school, profession, perhaps acquiring husband and children along the way. Others entered work as a "second life" after full-time mothering. Still others swerved and detoured and doubled back in a maze of schools, jobs, marriage (and also divorce) until in middle age they found "a work of my own."

And we reader-hitchhikers go with them. In each self-history we join a struggle to put together family, friendship, politics, and work. When Diana Geary Michener returned from Ansel Adams's photography workshop, "I worked hard—to the point of exhaustion. Washing prints in the kitchen sink while trying to cook dinner and listen to [her two daughters'] homework recitations before going out in the evening made me frantic. I felt constantly hungry but couldn't eat. Compulsively I over-stocked the refrigerator but kept dreaming it was empty."

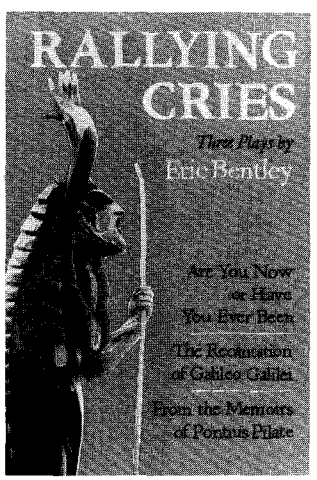
Frustration, confusion or plain fear made the motion of their lives. But also courage. And sometimes ecstasy. A sculpting course launched Alice Atkinson Lyndon into "night dreams of levitation, serene skimming over houses and people . . . . I'm talking about making sculpture—enclosing, connecting, extending form and space . . . . "

And always the hard work of self-understanding. Pamela Daniels began that work with a dream she had, midway through graduate school in political science, of Lenin as obstetrician delivering a baby from her navel. Ten years later—after writing a dissertation and bearing three sons and working for Erik Erikson and dropping out of academe to do "personal homework" with her family and her inner self—she finally

RALLYING CRIES

Three Plays

by Eric Bentley



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found employment that satisfied her. "Doing what you love," Daniels writes, "means knowing yourself well enough to be able to answer the question, 'What would you love to do?' and loving yourself enough to ask it." Her essay shimmers with both love and knowledge.

Psychotherapy helped many of these women find direction and energy. The woman's movement helped all of them. Through feminist theory and female friendships, each gained sudden new strength. Their lives, collectively and individually, began to come together.

Work is a crucial piece of the whole—but only a piece. Indeed, these women remind us that work comes in many guises. There is Daniels's dreamwork and personal homework. There is work as play—in fact, theater director Joann Green writes her autobiography as a script of pain and pun and "a few moments of blithering joy." And there is historian Marilyn Young's intricately evolving notion of work: first as payoff ("I brought home final grades like salary checks") and product (the dissertation); then as by-product ("I put the manuscript in a drawer, bought second-hand ski equipment . . . , smoked pot, played squash, learned to dance, grew fat, dieted again, grew fat again"); and finally as radical politics and teaching. But of course the process of "working it out" does not end. Like experience, it goes on. "I now feel free 'to do my own work,'" Young tells us. "What has become difficult is determining what that work can be, and how I can connect with it more intimately than I have so far."

We Were There is a book to be read in afternoons, then paraphrased or assigned. *Working It Out* is a book to be read in late evenings, to be entered like conversations, the intimate conversations one has with an old friend, and then to be absorbed like dreamwork into tomorrow's self.

Does that also apply to *male* self? In this anthology, men play marginal roles. Some are thanked as allies; some are hated as oppressors or recognized compassionately as frightened obstructionists; and many are ignored entirely (as if marriage had been the clapping on one hand, and children had been immaculate conceptions). Well, I tell myself, turnabout is fair play. Remember how many men have written wives out of their books. But there is more to be said. How many men, I ask myself, have considered so deeply the place of work in their lives? Precious few. Perhaps the real turnabout will come when we men can write a companion volume to *Working It Out*.

Peter Filene

Peter Filene, professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is author of *Him/Her/Self: Sex Roles in Modern America* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).

Transatlantic Patterns: Cultural Comparisons of England with America by Martin Green

(Basic Books; $11.95)

Americans abroad find England endearingly odd and mildly irritating. The crown and the House of Lords, ceremonial guards and periwigged justices, hereditary titles and archaic political rituals seem more at home in Madame Tussaud's than in public life. These are, of course, the beloved, if tarnished, emblems of a social bond; but Americans, following Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee, may come to see in them a reverence for rules, manners, and tradition that thwarts achievement and individuality.

By contrast, the Englishman views America with mingled perplexity and terror. Instead of respect for the past, decorum, and community, he finds novelty, movement, and self-interest. "Don't you come snooting us with your European traditions," Christopher Isherwood heard America say when he arrived as an expatriate; "we've got no time for what's slow, what's gracious, what's nice, quiet, modest." Isherwood's friend, Stephen Spender, called this restlessness the "self-realizing" spirit, which he opposed to the "self-cultivating" spirit of England; and another friend, W.H. Auden, found the one spirit embodied in Huck Finn, who spurned adoption in order to strike out on his own, and the other in Oliver Twist, who welcomed adoption with all the social ties it entailed.

If these contrasts show the wear of familiar stereotypes, they nevertheless hold firm in the light of writers who have traded one country for the other; Henry James and T.S. Eliot fled American barbarism for the deep-rooted culture of England; Isherwood and Auden reversed the trip in search of freer air to breathe and an unconstrained emotional life.

Another who made the trip to stay was Martin Green. Born into a lower-class English family, Green made his way through the state grammar schools (not the elite "public schools," known as "private" in the US) to Cambridge. There, he embraced F.R. Leavis's canons of earnest literary criticism and then fled the alien upper-class atmosphere, eventually to settle in America, where he has made a career exploring his ambivalences toward these two English-speaking cultures. His first book, *Mirror for Anglo-Saxons*, groped for cultural patterns to correspond with his feelings. Britain, he said, had been blighted by a trite, aristocratic image of herself—except for the few devotees of seriousness: Lawrence, Leavis, and Orwell—whereas America blazed with energy yet wanted discipline and style. He deepened and embellished these contrasts in *Cities of Light and Sons of the Morning* through a theory of rival temperaments (Erasmian, Faustian, Calvinist), whose battles for hegemony he detected throughout modern culture, from Goethe to Norman Mailer. Last year, his *Children of the Sun* supplemented this trio of temperaments with a history of the dandies, naifs, and rogues who have dominated English literature and public life since 1918.

This career in what Green calls "the 'cultural' study of literature" supplies the backdrop for the critical performance of *Transatlantic Patterns*. These

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thematically interwoven essays, some previously published, have the strengths, weaknesses, and leading ideas of the earlier works. The metaphors of temperament again labor under more weight than they can bear and never seemed more in need of rest or, better, retirement, since they often trivialize Green's cultural history and criticism. But if the metaphors can be ignored, Green's patterns of literary and cultural relations will be seen to polish and rejuvenate the stereotypes—without discarding them.

Preeminent among those patterns is a contrast in erotic life. The English writer is Erasmian, which, in Green's typology, means he has exchanged the forces of the body for the attributes of spirit, intellect, and moderation; the American writer is Faustian, having bargained the other way to get the rewards of instinct, passion, and excess. Besides this trade-off (Green uses the imagery of the market), the Englishman values sex for its Demetrian qualities of warmth, life, and fertile creation, but the American worships the Promethean sexuality of will and power and lust. In short, English culture is feminine, American masculine.

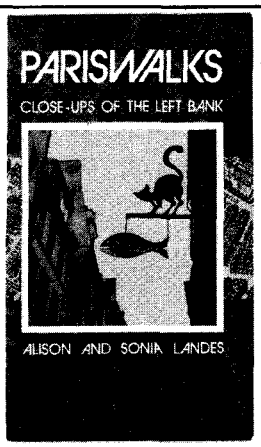
Green refines these ingenious and simplistic contrasts by culling support from many places, some obvious, like the literature of marriage (Lawrence *vs.* Howells), some not, like detective novels (Sayers *vs.* MacDonald). And he finds the contrasts never more pronounced than in the intellectual fashions taken up by the two countries since World War II. The Americans, led by Mailer and the "Post-Freudians," N.O. Brown and Herbert Marcuse, have created an ideology of *eros*, while the English, following Raymond Williams and other "Post-Marxists," have renewed the morality of community and self-sacrifice. The imprecise placing of Marcuse and the English "Post-Freudian," R.D. Laing, may dull this sharp opposition but does not nullify Green's conclusion that Marx belongs to the English heart and Freud to the American.

Green labels himself a modest Erasmian untainted by any "Calvinist" radicalism; hence he holds aloof from all temperamental extremes and from definite allegiance to either culture. Although awkward, this indeterminate stance provides Green many fresh perceptions of a familiar landscape; and when he sets the catchy metaphors aside, his buoyant curiosity and adroit sense of pertinence yield some excellent descriptions. For example, his essay on the English devotion to cliche and the American insensitivity to it merits reading and re-reading—especially by Americans—and the essays on humor and on Orwell and Waugh as cultural critics nicely balance the contrasts and affinities of ideas both within and between cultures.

Green's own ideals of art and culture get only passing nods here, but he hints at his desire for a marriage of critical seriousness (as exemplified by Leavis and Orwell) to esthetic pleasure (as exemplified by Waugh) and bestows a word of praise on the serious "playfulness" of his favorite novelist, Nabokov. Yet behind all of Green's ideals, observations, and criticisms of culture drift the shadows that have long haunted him: an England in decline; an innovative and indulgent modernism, which England never absorbed; and a modernity consuming all caution and community, which America has made her own.

James Sloan Allen

James Sloan Allen teaches European intellectual history at the Manhattan School of Music and the New School for Social Research.



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TRB, *from page 2*

Carter has television and has need of it. If he is going to find a way of meeting the energy crisis he has got to convince the American people that it exists. If he is going to halt nuclear proliferation by postponing construction of breeder reactors he must have the support of the public. He doesn't at present.

Last week Mr. Carter told his press conference that he thinks the energy crisis "the gravest domestic issue which I shall face during my own term as the President." Presidential Assistant Schlesinger put this into statistics: worldwide energy demand is increasing; available domestic supplies of oil and natural gas are declining. The 13 OPEC countries are exporting 29 million barrels of oil a day. Demand is growing by leaps and bounds. In seven years, demand could reach 50 billion barrels a day. But this level can be met only if Saudi Arabia greatly increases production.

Who is to carry this story to the public? Only the President. A Gallup Poll June 1 reports that little more than half of the American people are aware that the US must import oil to meet its energy needs. A third thought the US self-sufficient; 15 percent said they wouldn't venture a guess. And here's Lewis Lapham, editor of *Harper's* magazine in the current issue telling sophisticated readers that "I can find little evidence to justify the alarms and excursons in the newspapers" over the alleged crisis. He says he is writing about "the chemical nature of the energy crisis," whatever that means.

With a partial confrontation with Congress, and with a half-believing nation, the time has come for a test of Mr. Carter's leadership. And there's Herbert Hoover's television waiting for him.

Denis Hayes of Worldwatch Institute, a man whom I respect, rejects my effort to draw a distinction between "good" thermal nuclear reactors, and "bad" breeder reactors (like that at Clinch River, which Carter wants postponed.)

"Both produce plutonium," he writes. A standard conventional thermal reactor (of which 62 operate in the US today) running at full power "produces about 375 pounds of plutonium each year." Both menace humanity, Denis Hayes feels; the difference between them is that the breeder is bigger.

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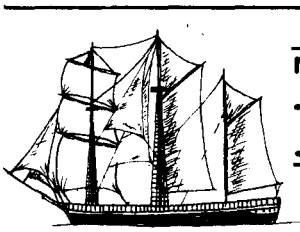

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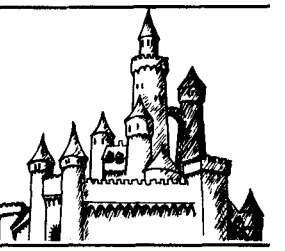

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Fort Horn across from the Naval Academy on Spa Creek, Annapolis, guarded the harbor from 1776 to 1866, and since then the only sound of guns has been from the starters of the innumerable sailboat races. Lafayette commanded French troops here during the British blockade, and George Washington allegedly spent the night. More recently Jimmy Carter attended the academy as did Stansfield Turner, his intelligence chief, who seems aimed as well as destined for greater things in the Carter administration. Sitting on the porch, feet at a comfortable pitch, one is mesmerized by the flotillas of boats that dot the creek and the bay off into the horizon, the sleek sailboats bending to the wind and the great power boats growling out fair warning to all who cross their threatening bows. A good deal of energy is being expended on the Chesapeake Bay. Not by me, beyond reflecting on the energy problem as the solar heat soaks into my willing form.

It wasn't long ago (November 1973) that another former naval officer, Richard M. Nixon, assessed the energy situation this way: "there are only six percent of the people of the world living in the United States, and we use 30 percent of all the energy. That isn't bad; that is good. That means we are the richest, strongest people in the world. That is why we need so much energy, and may it always be so."

Carter is wary about the energy mix, and in the martial spirit appropriate to the Naval Academy, he forged a mighty energy bill ("the moral equivalent to war") and the battle was joined last week in Congress. There were a number of casualties between the White House and Capitol Hill, but they will regroup to compete again. In a way, the conflicting groups are like the various boats one sees on a bright and smiling day at Horn Point. In the standard race, each class of boats competes within itself. In the energy race, it's everyone for himself.

Like a good sailor, Jimmy wanted a tight ship, a tidy package. Once Congress and the special interests got through with it, the deck needed swabbing. Jimmy was appalled. "The people will pay for it," he said. Why he didn't say Congress would pay for it, I don't know. I suspect they will. The next day Senator Robert Byrd (D, W. Va.) rebuked Jimmy for "overreacting," and suggested that Carter "cool it just a bit at this stage and let the process work."

Some process. In the committee vote in the House, natural gas was to be deregulated at a cost of over $80 billion to the people over the next five years. Other votes stretched out the auto pollution standards, and there will be no rebate for small energy efficient cars and not as much tax as Carter wanted on the gas-guzzlers. In the House and Senate committees there will be new compromises before the final battle with the President. Probably the defeats in the scrimmages are more apparent than real. All the measures favorable to Detroit, however, demonstrated to one and all that big labor and big business form one powerful lobby. It was a naked example of the corporate state, a perfect amalgam of interests of heretofore (supposedly) competing forces. We don't much like to talk about those things, smacking as they do of political philosophies we would sooner forget.

But there is another aspect to this battle, which we shall shortly reduce to the terms of a hypothetical boat race, entranced as I am by the approach of evening and the boats still busy on the bay. This is a good, old fashioned legislative fight, with the unions, gasoline, natural gas, and auto interests linked with various legislators for measures favorable to their financial interests. These special interests can gain support because legislators are still beholden to them for votes and money. They still can be influenced. Senator Charles Percy (R, Ill.) for example was reported to have enjoyed a cup of coffee with past and present UAW presidents Woodcock and Fraser right before the Senate vote on the stretch out on emission standards. Some say they were discussing how to cut back the price of coffee; others say they weren't. My point is though that with the funding of presidential candidates already established and with legislation to finance congressional campaigns well nigh upon us, we shall discover soon that incumbents are indeed beholden to no one except themselves.

As I see it, the energy bill will finally go as Carter wants it, trimmed about the edges. He has the advantage. There are four kinds of boats in the race. First, there is Jimmy in his Hatteras 41, moving at a steady 17 knots on one gallon of gas per nautical mile; there is Congress in its Boston whaler, which the press insists is not 14 feet long but 41 feet long, and is powered by an inboard and not an outboard engine. It rides badly in heavy seas and the passengers are prone to seasickness. And the special interests in their deep blue sloops, classy and fast, but only when there is a favorable wind.

Finally, there are the honest post-Watergate journalists in their Sunfishes, tiny and economical and clean looking. They can be handily sailed by one person, attuned to the waves and the wind, trimming the single sail to the edge of the wind and going on and on with the illusion of speed that comes from being so close to the water. There is a good deal of virtue in a Sunfish. The disadvantage is that they ride wet and are susceptible to upsetting. The average journalist would rather ride on one of the large craft, and board as often as possible, even though it is increasingly difficult to do and retain one's credibility. Jimmy in this kind of race will cross the finish line first and gain the public acclaim. The people will pay for his bill too, perhaps not as much. They will be grateful for that and amused to see the losers come in at dusk, their port and starboard lights flashing, as though all along they had been seriously in the race and that their failure was the result of a navigational error, a worn cleat, a faulty spark plug, instead of not really having been in the race after the turn at the first buoy. Some of the Sunfish will be in tow by the Boston whaler, and the crews of others will be on board the sloop in time for the cocktail hour.

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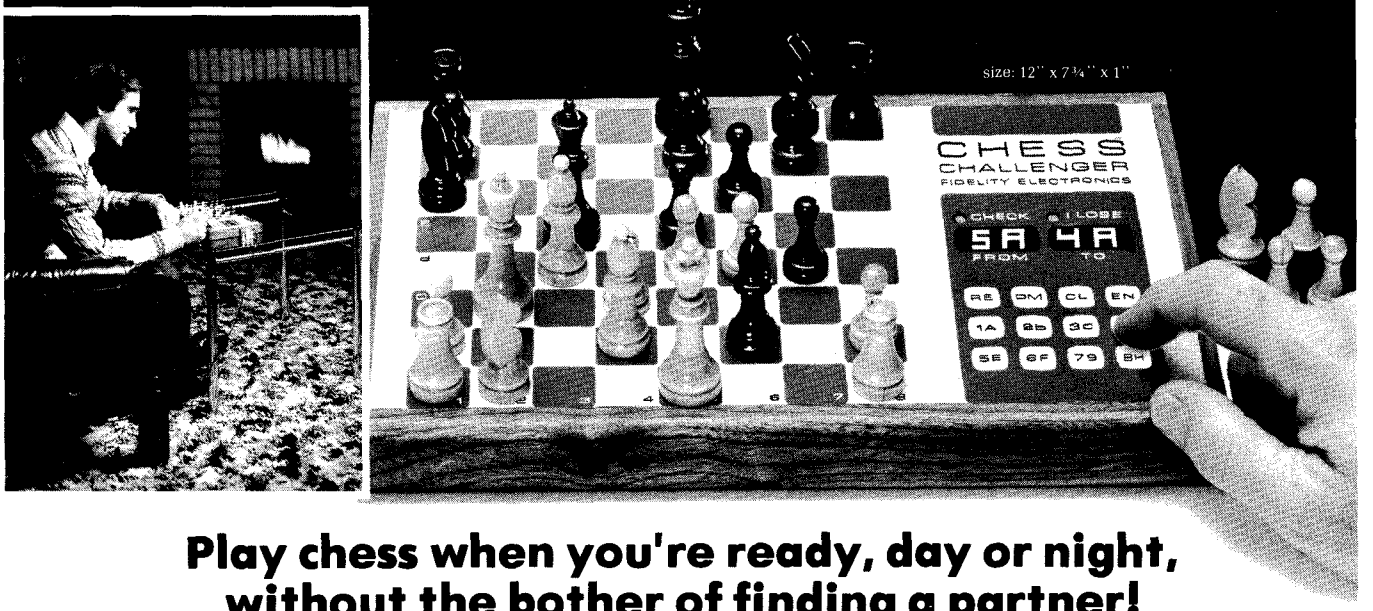

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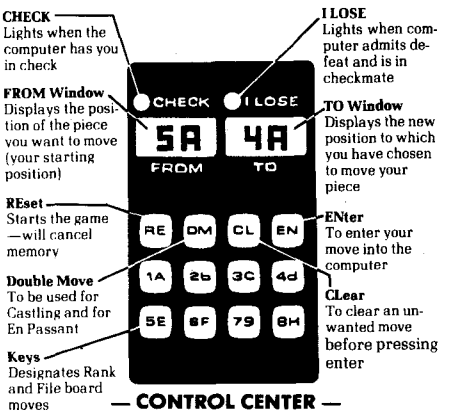

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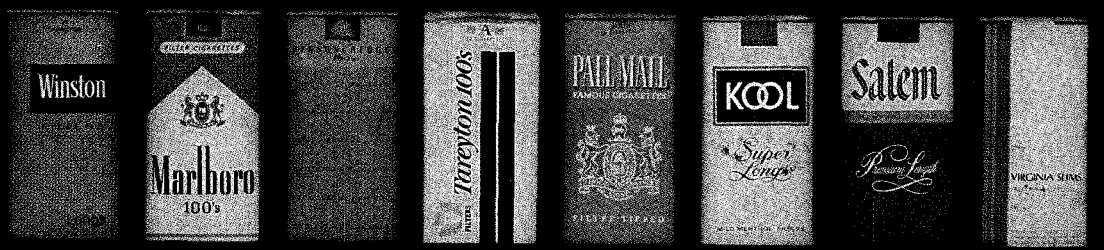

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